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AND

RUSSIAN LITERATURE

BY

PRINCE SERGE WOLKONSKY

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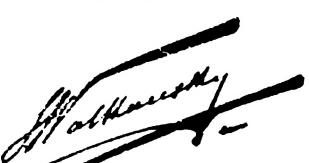

Lowell Lectures

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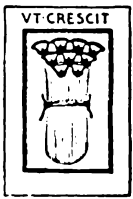
BY

PRINCE SERGE WOLKONSKY



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No other *history* would I have than that of our forefathers such as God has willed it.

POUSHKIN.

In days of doubt, in days of distressing meditations on the fate of my country, — in thee alone I trust, O Russian *language*, — great, mighty, truthful, free. . . . It is impossible to disbelieve that such a language should not have been given to a great people.

TOURGENIEFF.

From February 5, 1896, *till May* 5, 1897, *these Lectures were wholly or partly delivered in*

Lowell Institute, Boston.
Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
Columbia University, New York.
Washington Club, Washington, D.C.
University of Chicago.
Steinway Hall, Chicago, Ill.
Twentieth Century Club, Chicago, Ill.
All Souls' Church, Chicago, Ill.
Art Museum, St. Louis, Mo.
Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.
Carnegie Hall, New York.

There are two kinds of representatives in a university: the one represents the degree of culture in the country; the other, its youthfulness, its wants, its energies, its passions. . . . The university is the best barometer of a society.

N. T. PIROGOFF.

To American Universities

TO PROFESSORS FOR THEIR KIND ENCOURAGEMENT

TO STUDENTS FOR THEIR HEARTY RESPONSIVENESS

IN SIGN OF GRATITUDE

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

P. S. W.

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(INTRODUCTORY)

Foreign notions of Russia; reasons for their scarcity. Our object. The æsthetical element in historical studies. Art as promoter of sociability. Nationalism or cosmopolitism?

Bird's-eye view of Russian history from its origin to the present time.

LECTURE I

Wherever there are outlets into celestial space, wherever is danger, and awe, and love, — there is Beauty. — EMERSON.

WE have before us a task capable of rendering us diffident in many respects. Within the short limits of a few lectures, I have to unroll before your eyes, and you — if only you agree to follow me — will have to run through the panoramic picture of the historical and literary development of a whole country; a country which extends from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific, from the sunny vineyards of the Crimea facing Asia Minor to the frozen swamps of the Behring coast facing Alaska, from the snow and ice of the Norwegian shores down to the burning sands of Central Asia and to the heights of the Pamirs; a country which in these limits represents a surface of 406,000 square miles, *i.e.* forty-two times as big as the surface of France, or, to borrow the astronomical comparison of Humboldt, — who thought he could not find the equivalent on earth, — a surface which is equal to the surface of the full moon; a country which takes the seventh part of the terrestrial globe, counts over 120,000,000 inhabitants, and over a thousand years of history.

In the few hours at our disposal for the development of our programme, there can be no question of presenting a complete course of Russian history and literature. We will endeavour to hold an uninterrupted thread of events,

but we cannot possibly devote equal attention to all the epochs we shall have to study, and even in those epochs which we may examine with more special attention we shall not be able to embrace the entire many-sidedness of historical life; we shall have to abstract from each period that which constitutes its main characteristic, considering that it is more useful and interesting to know much about one thing than little about many things.

Therefore, you will have to excuse me if, for instance, the lecture on Peter the Great will present a matter-of-fact character, whereas in the lecture on Catherine the Great the side of events will be almost absent in order to give place to the description of the intellectual and literary movements of the time.

Once more, a *course* of Russian history and literature is unrealizable in eight hours' time; the only thing we may venture under such conditions is to give *pictures* of Russian history and literature, connected, as far as possible, by an uninterrupted thread of facts.

But that which makes our task still harder is the fact that so little as yet is known about Russia abroad. Intending to retrace Russia's historical growth before a foreign audience, I know that I shall have to raise up a good portion of the building before I reach a fact or a name which is universally known and which may enable me to form a link between our subject and the average cycle of knowledge of a well-educated foreigner. I know that through long historical periods we shall proceed as in a voyage of discovery, and perhaps the name of Peter the Great, who appears after Russia had existed for eight hundred years, will be the first stone I can borrow from your edifice of universal history for our edifice of Russian history.

Of course those events of Russian history which are closely interwoven with the general history of Europe are well known, but it is hardly to be supposed that their inner connection and their national evolution have been matters of study to the average foreign student. Just the same, and perhaps with more reason, in literature. The fame of many a poet has crossed our frontier; the names of Gogol, Tourgenieff, Dostoyevsky, have flown over the ocean, and I do not know whether in any country more splendour surrounds the wonderful figure of Leo Tolstoi than here in America. And yet I think that the reciprocal relation of these authors cannot be gathered from the mere reading of their works; their connection with certain foreign writers, their dependence upon the general literary movement in Western Europe, can be followed up, but the filiation of their own literary schools, and, above all, their connection with the historical, political, and intellectual development of their own country, cannot but escape the observation of the foreign reader.

Thus even that which is generally known of Russian history or literature scarcely helps to form a sufficient idea either of our country or people or life. The sudden interest in Russian writers which has broken out in these last twenty years is too recent to compensate for so many years of indifference.

If we follow up the reasons why foreign countries have been, and, in many respects, are still, ignorant of our country, we shall find that they are of three different kinds. The first reason is historical. Only since Peter the Great, that is, for little over two hundred years, has Russia taken an active part in European history; before that, commercial relations, exchange of

extraordinary embassies, and a few marriages of Russian princesses with foreign sovereigns in the very early period of our history, were the only occasions when Europe heard of Russia: Russia lived for herself and did not trouble about Europe.

The second reason is philological. Western Europe has been divided among the two great families of the Aryan group: the Latin and the German. Their long cohabitation, commercial intermingling, and political intercourse helped them to know each other: any man, even if he knew no language but his own, felt an inborn relationship with all nations of his family,—consequently was philologically related to half Europe. This of course furthered, if I may say so, his historical sociability. The Russian language, though of the same great Aryan group, belongs to the Slavonic family; therefore a Russian could feel no inborn relationship with any of the Western European nations. The antique Latin culture which has been the great unifying force which amalgamated the western nations of Europe, had not included Russia within its historical evolution. Russia had no direct intellectual inheritance from antiquity; she received a portion of it by way of Byzantium, but she did not participate in the common growth of European nations: before she had conquered by force that which belonged to others by right of birth, she had been regarded as not belonging to the common European family. That sort of mistrust which is inspired by the mystery of an unknown language, had for a long time denied to Russia the social equality which other European nations granted to each other on the historical arena.

The third reason of foreign ignorance of Russian

affairs is psychological. One of our writers said: "If you want an intelligent Englishman or Frenchman to talk nonsense, let him emit an opinion on Russia: it is a subject which intoxicates him and at once clouds his intellect."[1] It would be injustice and ingratitude on our part to extend this judgment to the respectable works of men of science or travellers and explorers who devoted many years of their lives to the study of the history, literature, and institutions of our country, such as Ralston, Mackenzie Wallace, Leroy-Beaulieu, Rambaud and others, whom we shall have occasion to quote; but applied to the average traveller or novel-writer, exaggerated as it may seem, the judgment contains a good deal of truth.

People usually form a certain amount of *a priori* ideas of a country, and when they get there, rather than open their brains for new impressions and new influences, they are interested in taking notice of the slightest facts that can be registered as a confirmation of their ideas: they want, at any cost they want, reality to match their opinions. Instead of a voyage of discovery, it becomes a voyage of "constatations." I remember an American girl who frankly confessed that she did not like Russian novels representing Russian life; she thought things they pictured were not original enough, lacking "local colour"; she much preferred English novels *about* Russia, they were so much more "Russian." This is characteristic. The "Russian novel" as known in English and French literature acquires a sort of exotic charm: snow and wolves and police agents, with the threatening prospect of Siberia in the background, give to the pictures of our human

[1] Prince Viazemsky, "Lettres d'un Vétéran russe."

passions that same varnish which other authors try to give them by transporting their stories into Central Africa or to New Zealand. By a strange tendency of their pen, or perhaps because they supplied the demand of the greater portion of their readers, these authors in the things they described — whether right or wrong — seemed to turn their attention exclusively in one direction; thus the name of our country came to possess the sad property of evoking horrible pictures of violence and slavery. We will not discuss — we are not here for polemics; we will still less pay attention to the sensational news spread by the daily press of those countries which are politically interested in exciting appetites to which our philosopher gives the picturesque appellation of "international cannibalism."[1]

For my part I hope, I am sure, that I stand before an audience which has not lost that divine gift, which is the faculty of admiration, which trusts the good elements of human nature, which believes in their triumphant march from the darkest ages to the light of the present day, and which knows that the history of a people, being the record of a laborious process whereby a portion of the great human family obtained its national self-consciousness, is an honourable book, that it contains brilliant pages, glorious names, examples of virtue, and lessons which command respect. There is an uplifting spirit which emanates from all that is noble, great, and beautiful — wherever and whenever it happens; and it is not a shallow feeling of narrow patriotism which actuates me when I say that this is the spirit which must guide us on our way through our subject; it is not in order to obtain a satis-

[1] Vl. Solovioff, "Morality and Politics," in *The National Question in Russia*, St. Petersburg, 1891 (Russian).

faction of national pride, not because I wish to declaim at your expense patriotic rhapsodies which I know can touch no chords in a foreign heart, but because that uplifting spirit is the only element which gives to accounts of national history an educational value from the universal point of view. The pleasure we find in initiating people into the history of our fatherland does not come from the fact that we intensify our nationalism, or that we give an absolute value to things which have but a limited importance; the satisfaction comes from the fact that from those events which have a temporary or local significance we abstract the eternal elements of moral or artistic beauty, and abandoning the soil of our private interests we bring them over into the great arena of science and art, where everything belongs to everybody.

"Beauty," says one of our writers, "is the only spiritual quality of matter; consequently beauty is the only link between these two fundamental elements of the universe."[1] But if so, what a powerful instigator for the acknowledgment of the universal relationship of things and men, and of men between themselves, is the faculty of responsiveness to beauty we all bear in our hearts. And what an important part in that furthering of national sociability, which is based on responsiveness to beauty, belongs to art in general, — art being the embodiment of beauty, — and to literature more particularly, as to the most many-sided of all arts, and the least dependent on place or means of execution. Art is — and it will always be so more and more — one of the greatest powers which work at the destruction of those barriers which have been erected against human intercourse by national distinctions.

[1] Danilevsky.

We will not examine here whether nationalism is an element of good or of evil, whether patriotism is a form of pride, and therefore to be condemned, or a kind of devotion, and therefore to be exalted as a virtue: let politics take care of geographical frontiers, and illuminate the map of the world with the glaring colours of national divisions, — art and science will pursue their task; they will not allow human hearts to be imprisoned in those frontiers. And how could it be otherwise? Nationalities are limited by time and space; art and science stand above both. We generally seem unconscious of this fact; we always seem inclined to confine the work of an artist to his time, to his country; it is quite right from the point of view of the creation, but quite wrong from the points of view of the enjoyment. For instance, suppose we take Shakespeare: of course, first of all, his works are English and of the Elizabethan period; but this, as I said, only from the point of view of the creation; from the point of view of the enjoyment, they are mine as well as yours or as anybody's at any time, and it only depends upon myself to make them still more mine than anybody else's. This the great power of art which comes from its eternal and universal character we seem to overlook. We so often repeat: "Shakespeare belongs to England and to the Elizabethan period," and we do not seem to realize the inexactness of the expression. No, Shakespeare does not belong to the Elizabethan period; he lived and worked in the Elizabethan period, he does not belong to England; he was born in England, but he belongs to the whole world, to any man, in any country, at any time from the Elizabethan period down to the eternity of eternities.

Great can be the power of art if we only consent to open our hearts to its beneficent influence; and let us not allow political antipathies, national susceptibilities, religious controversies, prejudices against an epoch or a country or an individual, to steal in between our soul and a work of art; all these are venomous feelings, but their sting is turned against ourselves. It has no power of wounding the work of art; for art is invulnerable and flourishes on in its serene tranquillity above the reptiles of human narrow-mindedness. No, let us approach a work of art with that same oblivion of human divisions with which we fly to the salvation of a man who runs a mortal peril; as with a burning-glass, let us gather and concentrate the irradiating beams of beauty so as to light in our hearts the sacred glow of responsiveness and sympathy. Let us cultivate and preserve in our souls the divine gift of admiration, let it not be intimidated, let it not be trampled upon; for every new chord which vibrates in ourselves becomes a new point of contact with others, whereas a man who loves nothing loves no one.

Two divergent tendencies in our days dispute with each other the supremacy over the direction of human thought, — nationalism and cosmopolitism.

In these latter days the two opinions have been strained to the last limits of reason and logic, but do you not think that the tempest of controversies ought to appease itself before questions of science and art? When people try to determine whether science and art are national or cosmopolitan, it seems to me as hollow and useless an attempt as if they were to try to decide whether the river belongs to the mountain or to the ocean. No work of art is good unless it has been indi-

vidual and national, but what is the test of its being good? It is the fact that it has become universal and cosmopolitan. That faculty of widening, of expanding, — that is what gives value to intellectual things; products of human genius rise above the soil of their birth, and by following them we rise ourselves; their national spirit becomes a force which leads us on the way towards universality; therefore it is not a treason against humanity if we love our fatherland, just as there is no treason against our fatherland if we love humanity. As the oak is virtually contained in the acorn, so the universal importance of a noble feeling is contained in its national significance.

These are the ideas I wished to establish before we pass on to our subject; I should feel glad to have them shared by my audience, for the best condition of success in community of work is community of sentiment.

In a few rapid strokes let us plant the sign-posts of our narration.

In the misty twilight of those times when history and legend just begin to differentiate, the name of Rurik appears as the starting-point of Russian history. A Norman prince, invited by the Slavonic tribes, who lived in the great plain between the Black Sea and the Baltic, he leaves his native Norway, brings over with him his family, his fighting men, and the name of his Norman tribe, Russ. This was in 862. He settles in Novgorod, which becomes the chief town of that earliest period, and he starts the dynasty which reigned till the end of the sixteenth century. His successors transfer their residence down to Kiev on the high and picturesque bank of the Dnieper. The chief event of that

period is the introduction of Christianity by the Grand Duke of Kiev, Vladimir, in 987. Numerous monasteries display a vigorous activity of learning, teaching, translating, and become the centre of intellectual life. But the land is troubled by constant quarrels of the princes fighting for the possession of the grand-ducal throne of Kiev and by the incursions of Asiatic nomadic tribes, as the Petchenegs, Polovtsy, and finally the Tartars who invade the country and subjugate it in the beginning of the thirteenth century. Out of the disorder of that period of formation, on the sombre background of intestine dissensions, two great figures shine with serenity in national memory, — Yaroslav the Wise, who collected in one book all the oral rules and customs of juridical proceedings, and in the "Russian Law" gave the first written document of Russian legislation; Vladimir Monomah — the terror of the rebellious princes and the favourite of the people. We shall learn to appreciate his gentle character and high spiritual qualities when we examine that famous document known as the "Will of Vladimir Monomah," one of the most touching specimens of Middle-Age literature.

The Tartar yoke plunges the whole country into deep night; all attempts at independent political life are suppressed, those fresh germs of inner national growth which gave such vigorous offshoots in the cloister movement and in the political wisdom of the above-mentioned princes, are destroyed, and all possibility of progress is cut off for two hundred years. But national feeling was too deeply rooted in the hearts of the people; while old Kiev, with her acropolis of monasteries and churches, gradually loses all political importance, a new acropolis is rising, — the "white-walled," the "golden-headed" Mos-

cow. Under the reign of a series of wise and prudent princes she grows slowly but surely, and all the other princes finally have to acknowledge her supremacy as the only means of salvation; Moscow becomes the central point of national self-consciousness, and in the chronicles she is mentioned with the epithets, "heart of Russia" or "collector of the Russian land." In 1380 the first regular battle is fought with the Tartar, and gained by the Grand Duke Dimitry on the banks of the Don. The emancipation has begun: a hundred years later, under the Grand Duke John III, the enemy is finally expelled. The hard work of formation is fulfilled, the incubation period is finished, the princedom of Moscow stands firmly relying upon the acknowledgment of national self-consciousness, and in 1547 John IV, called the Terrible, crowns himself the first Tsar of Moscow. We will stop in our studies at this wonderful figure, whose name has been synonymous with terror; that sanguinary autocrat, who dressed like a monk, who knew by heart the Scriptures, and whose victims are numbered by thousands; that unfortunate infanticide who lived in a mixture of blood and church incense; that combination of Louis XI and Henry VIII, whom death prevented from repudiating his seventh wife at the very moment he was negotiating with Queen Elizabeth of England to obtain the hand of her niece—the princess of Hastings. We will come back to this wonderful figure whose memory has been perpetuated in folk-lore, painting, sculpture, novels, and tragedies.

The horrors of that reign are but like an introduction to a series of calamities which overflow the country. John's son is a gentle, sweet, but feeble-minded sovereign, and with his death in 1598 the old dynasty of

merely pictorial and quite superficial character, I should like to give you. Do you think picturesque details of dressing, and what French people call "mise en scène" deserve to be looked down upon? I do not think they do. I think they help us to put an event in its place; sometimes they help us to recall a fact we had forgotten; they are like nails which fasten a picture to our memory; and they have still another importance: one detail of that kind has the property of evoking a whole epoch, — a picture can be filled by one stroke. Who does not know the evoking power of the "toga," of the "spur," of the "jabot," of the powdered wig? Each of these words, like a condensed volume, melts in our memory and fills it up with things which are not said, but divined; this sparing of work produced by the force of association is one of the most precious faculties of a well-educated brain desirous to learn. So let us not despise those superficial things, but let us take some illustrated volume representing portraits of Russian sovereigns. When you get to the eighteenth century you might think it is another volume illustrating another world, and still it is only another part of the same volume, — it is divided by a page, one single page, but at the bottom of the portrait which adorns that page, in a disorderly and hasty handwriting, we read the Latin signature "Petrus." He is generally represented in the attire of a knight in the armour in which all European sovereigns of that time, though they never wore it, liked to be portrayed: they knew they were the last ones who could appear in the eyes of posterity in such attire without incurring the accusation of masquerading. Perhaps you would have preferred another picture, — you would rather have had him in his everyday

dress, — his wide knickerbocker trousers and brown frock-coat, that famous costume that had been displayed to the eyes of all Europe, at all the courts, in the Dutch and English dock-yards, and which has been so well described by Saint-Simon in his Memoirs where he relates Peter's visit to Paris, and the first meeting with the infant Louis XV; how contrary to all etiquette he took the child in his arms, lifted him up and kissed the King of France.[1] Of course that portrait would be more typical, though it is not his official one. Now take the last page before Peter, — it will probably be either his brother John, or his sister, the famous Princess Sophia who was too clever for a Tsar's sister, too dangerous for Peter's plans, and therefore had to be removed to a convent. Look at these portraits: how far from our times these young though dignified figures under their royal attires! Look at Peter's father Alexis, at his grandfather Michael, — they are the last ones of that long portrait gallery; look at their Byzantine gravity, the ecclesiastic sumptuousness of their gold-embroidered mantles, how venerable their long-bearded heads, under the golden crown, the famous "cap of Monomah," trimmed with fur and surmounted with a cross; and Peter's mother, that respectable lady in a long fur mantle, with a fur bonnet, and a white silk kerchief draped round her head so as to leave open the nice intelligent face.

And now let us turn again to Peter, and then one page more. If in turning over an illustrated volume of French history, you should jump from Charlemagne straight over to the powdered marquises of Louis XV, the transition would not be more surprising. Who is that stout lady in a French low dress, black

[1] "Mémoires du Duc de Saint-Simon." Paris, 1872, t. IX.

curls twisting on her naked shoulders, a little diamond crown in her ebony hair, a fat full-moon face, with a double chin, and a pleasant smile on her sensual lips? This is Peter's wife, the Empress Catherine. (What a difference from his mother!) And the next one, that youth with a powdered wig, an uninteresting face? It is Peter II, Peter the Great's grandson.

We cannot take them up one by one, — all those emperors and empresses who so rapidly succeed each other after Peter's death in 1725. With the exception of his daughter, the Empress Elizabeth, his immediate successors are too insignificant, and they are all put in the shade by the figure of Catherine the Great.

On the 28th of June, 1762, in consequence of a palace revolution, Catherine, a former princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, now the wife of the Emperor Peter III, is proclaimed Empress; Peter is confined to a suburban palace, but with that care of opportuneness which history so often showed in good old times, he dies on the 6th of July. The brilliant and showy reign of the "Northern Semiramis" begins. Surrounded by a pleiad of eminent men in politics, diplomacy, literature, she leads her country in the direction pointed out by the great reformer, and effects its final incorporation in the family of the European powers. The pomp and splendours of that reign furnish the subject of the first inspired pages of our literature. Draped in a Roman mantle, the pseudo-classical poetry loudly blows the trumpet of praise, and to French tunes sings the virtues of the Great Empress in sonorous Russian verses. The young and vigorous language, which had only just begun to detach itself from the antiquated Slavonian forms, with a marvellous rapidity evolves towards its final emancipa-

tion: Derjavine, the venerable poet who survives the Empress whom he had celebrated in his odes, passes over the threshold of the century, and before descending into the grave is given the chance of greeting that youth who is going to raise the Russian language to its pinnacle. Poushkin greeted by Derjavine, — the genesis and the whole evolution of Russian literature is held in these words.

The last three years of the eighteenth century are taken up by the reign of Catherine's son, Paul. This short reign has one legendary page, and though it should rather be put among appendices than in the very text of Russian history, it is nevertheless one of the most brilliant pages of Russia's military glory. In 1799, the field-marshal, Count Souvorov, one of the glories of the precedent reign, takes the command of an army which marches to the liberation of the Austrian possessions in Italy from the French dominion. Two weeks after his arrival he makes his triumphant entrance into Milan, then Turin is taken — in six weeks all Northern Italy is cleared; the two French generals, Moreau and Macdonald, are defeated one after the other; Mantua is taken, General Jaubert is killed at Novi, and forty-five hundred French soldiers made prisoners. Italy is liberated, but the French troops menace Austria from Switzerland; with the greatest difficulties, at the cost of a loss of two thousand men, Souvorov passes the St. Gothard. Every step has to be conquered. At the famous Devil's Bridge the struggle becomes desperate, but it is taken and passed over; on the other side the exhausted army of less than twenty thousand stands before an enemy of sixty thousand; but Massena had the same fate as the others, and the Russian army at last rejoins

the Austrians — barefooted but crowned with laurels. Few travellers crossing the St. Gothard in a comfortable sleeping-car, and looking at the arch of a half-ruined bridge overhanging the blue abyss of a misty precipice, realize that they contemplate a monument of Russian military glory. Three future marshals of Napoleon defeated, and under what conditions! And Napoleon himself? Unfortunately Bonaparte was in Egypt just at that time. The old field-marshal, who had been keeping a close eye on the young general's exploits, used to say: "The fellow strides a pretty good pace," but history denied posterity one of the most interesting episodes, by not providing for a meeting between Souvorov and Bonaparte. As I said, that campaign having no link with national interests is to be classified among appendices of Russian history; if we have stopped at it a little longer than the rapidity of our narrative will allow, it is because such kinds of mingling in other nations, — affairs without any practical benefit, — have been one of the features of Russian diplomacy of this century; they have been put an end to by the national policy of the late Emperor Alexander III.

We enter into the nineteenth century with the reign of Paul's eldest son, Alexander I; his strange inexplicable figure, whose individual qualities exercised such an irresistible fascination on his contemporaries and leave posterity so indifferent, is connected with the memorable year 1812, — the year of the "fatherland's war," as in our history they call that campaign against Napoleon, — the memorable year when the conqueror of the world was defeated and turned to flight "by the rigour of the climate," as is usually said by those who are interested in diminishing the importance of Russia's participation in

that decisive moment of European history; and they forget that Napoleon crossed our frontier in June, that the famous battle at Borodino was in September, that consequently he had plenty of time before the winter set in to be as successful in Russia as he had been in other countries, and that his flight and the retreat of his army were effected only in late autumn and the beginning of winter. The date of 1812 will always shine in national memory: it is to every Russian synonymous with self-oblivion in the consciousness of national unity; the outburst of patriotic feeling of that epoch has never been surpassed but once—two hundred years before, in those "times of confusion" we spoke of a while ago. The handsome figure of Alexander I becomes inseparable from the pictures of those great events which evolved in Europe from 1805 to 1815. An air of continuous feast, of parade, seems to escort him through that epoch of European coalitions and congresses; but it does not alter the spirit of beautiful serenity and majestic carelessness which emanates from his person; in Europe's collective action against Napoleon he becomes the centre, the arbiter; the enthusiasm of the nations delivered from the Cæsar's yoke surrounds him with a mystic and romantic aureole; it becomes a delirium when he enters Paris at the head of the allied armies with the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia on either side; it rises to its culminating point when, after the congresses of Vienna, Laybach, Verona, and after his visit to London, he undertakes his journey homewards, and when on the whole stretch through those foreign countries, pacified and reintegrated on their frontiers, it is like an uninterrupted pathway of triumphal arches with the dedication "Alexandro Benedicto."

At home it is the time when Karamsin erects that fine monument of Russian prose — his "History of the Russian State," when Joukovsky breaks the traditions of pseudo-classicism and tunes the chords of his lyre according to his romantic aspirations, when Poushkin descends into the depths of the national soul and brings to light the first jewels of independent Russian poetry. The great intellectual fermentation begins and goes on so rapidly that the sunrise and the brightest daylight of Russian literature are contained in less than forty years. The voices in favour of the emancipation of the serfs resound louder and louder; unfortunately on the accession of Alexander's brother, Nicholas I, in 1825, they break out in the violences of a revolutionary movement which has to be suppressed by force. But the awaking of spirits unchains the different currents of opinions; German philosophy takes the place of the French ideas of the eighteenth century, Hegelianism crosses the frontier, and with its "nimbus of infallibility," inflames the hearts of all that young generation which grew up in the idealistic exaltation of romanticism. Literary societies arise, and in their numerous periodicals fill the air with violent discussions.

Two great tendencies here for the first time accentuate their bifurcation with sharply distinct colours; the "Slavophiles," the champions of the national idea, national civilization, revilers of Europe, and the "Westernists," champions of one common European civilization, preachers of universalism. The two tendencies ever since diverge in their solutions of every important question of national life: Russia's destiny, the value of Peter the Great's reform, all events of our history up to the Norman origin of Rurik become as many

wedges which split the current of Russian critical thought.

In the stormy intercrossing of opinions the new literary tendencies make their way: Gogol throws aside the veil of literary conventionality and by uncovering human nature in its sad nakedness, starts the Russian naturalistic school; Lermentov gives way to the bitterness of his romantic desperation and by adding it to the healthy and somewhat epicurean lyrics of Poushkin completes the chords of Russian lyrical poetry; Koltzoff goes to the root of the peasant's language and with his poems gives a beginning to the literature in Russian popular style.

The alarm caused in official circles by the revolutionary outburst in Western Europe about 1848, and the trials of the Crimean War, arrest for a while the free development of the literary movement, but the names of Tourgenieff and Tolstoi have already dawned. The Emperor Alexander II ascends in 1855, and on the 19th of February, 1862, the emancipation of the serfs is proclaimed. The brilliant pleiad of poets and writers which group themselves round that date have all grown in the vivifying atmosphere which breathed around the throne, while the famous commission presided over by Count Rostovtsev was holding its sittings to help the monarch in his plans.

One single act in the history of the nineteenth century can be confronted with that act of Emperor Alexander II. Another country, too, delivered millions of human beings from slavery, but that which in a republic was obtained at the cost of a civil war and four years of bloodshed, was accomplished in Russia by a few enlightened men working in the direction which

had been pointed out for them by their enlightened monarch. And it was not a mere whim of destiny but the sovereign will of Providence that the name of Alexander II should be indissolubly connected with the memory of the American civil war: the spirit which favours the accomplishment of those great acts by which humanity advances towards the fulfilment of her destiny is the same everywhere, in every individual, in every country, in every nation; and no geographical limits are wide enough, no national divisions profound enough, no political barriers high enough to dismember the unity of the human soul or to prevent the acknowledgment of this unity from taking root in our conscience. You know Alexander II's tragic end in 1881; from that date begins the reign of the Emperor Alexander III, whose loss we all deplored eighteen months ago.

Thus from history we enter into actuality. At our next meeting we will return into the twilight of Russia's early day and folk-lore.

LECTURE II

(862–1224)

Two voices from antiquity. East and West in the destiny of European nations. Russia's beginning. The "Norman theory." Kiev and Byzantium. Vladimir and the baptism of Russia. Rôle of the monasteries.

Ecclesiastical literature. Nestor and the annals.

Popular literature — religious songs, epic songs. "The Word about Igor's Fights."

The "Veche," the prince. Jaroslav the Wise and the "Russian Law." Vladimir Monomah and his "Will." Russia and Europe in the ante-Mongolian period.

LECTURE II

Narration of times of yore, about how Russia came to life, about who was the first to rule in Kiev, and how the Russian country began to be. — TITLE OF NESTOR'S CHRONICLE (eleventh century).

THE sovereigns of the Middle Ages liked to have their genealogy traced back into antiquity, and their names put in direct filiation with those of Augustus and Cæsar. Modern historiographers like to descend from Herodotus, and endeavour by all means to hunt up their information as far back in antiquity as the first pages by the venerable "Father of History." (Are you quite sure we shall not find his name in the first chapter of some historical work on the Argentine Republic?) Russian historical writers, when they ascend to that source, get no ethnographical information suiting their purposes, but they have the satisfaction of seeing, if not their ancestors, at least their territory, mentioned by Herodotus.

When the venerable writer crossed the Hellespont to visit the Greek colonies which flourished in what is now the Crimea and the northern coast of the Sea of Azov, he saw prosperous towns, beautiful temples, porticos with slender columns, people walking up the marble staircases to worship the gods of their fatherland; and beyond these towns he saw a country of endless plains and wide rivers; and on these plains nomadic hordes of Scythians were wandering and pasturing their cattle.

Of all that scene the endless plains and the wide rivers alone remain. The scarce but precious relics of the Greek colonies — the beautiful jewels from the excavations of Kertch — lie in the glass cases of the Kertch museum in the Imperial Hermitage of St. Petersburg,[1] and the Scythians disappear, absorbed and swept away by the Sarmatians and those innumerable nomadic tribes which Asia sent out on Europe, like destructive winds from the depths of her deserts.[2] Thus break the threads which attach our history to Herodotus.

The nomadic tribes of Asia continue their incursions on the plains of Southeastern Europe from Herodotus' times down to the thirteenth century of our era. The chief moments of these incursions are: the Huns in the fifth century, the Avars, repelled by Charlemagne in the eighth century, and the Mongolians, with whose invasion in 1224 the Tartar yoke of Russia begins. But, long before that date, in the earliest time of our era, the Asiatic hordes meet with a new people, who are living at the very entrance of Western Europe, at the foot of the Carpathian Mountains along the lower course of the Danube. These are Slavonians; their forefathers were known to Tacitus, as living on the southeast shores of the Baltic. When Tacitus asks himself whether he shall classify them among Asiatics or among Euro-

[1] On excavations in Southern Russia: "Antiquités du Bosphore Cimmérien conservées au Musée Impérial de l'Hermitage." 3 vols. St. Petersburg, 1854. "Compte rendu de la Commission Impériale Archéologique pour les années 1859–1883 avec atlas in f°." St. Petersburg, 1860–1883. "Recueil d'antiquités de la Scythie publié par la Commission Imp. Archéol." St. Petersburg, 1866–1870. N. Kondakov and Ct. T. Tolstoi, "Antiquités de la Russie méridionale." Paris, 1891.

[2] On these early times: E. Bonnel, "Beiträge zur Alterthumskunde Russlands." St. Petersburg, 1882.

peans, he answers: among the latter, for they build houses, wear shields, and fight on foot, all which is just the contrary of what the Sarmatians do, who live in vehicles and fight on horseback.[1] Thus the great Roman historian anticipates the statements of anthropology, comparative philology, and other modern sciences by the sagacity of his observation and his unprejudiced judgment.

How far, how different this early verdict of history from the opinion of that German writer, who at the beginning of our century divided human beings into *men* and *Russians*. But then Klinger was a poet and not a historian nor a philologist. Historians know that the Slavonians with the Greek, Latins, and Germans belong to the great Indo-Aryan family, which, centuries before history's record begins, moved from India through Central Asia and the Caucasus westward;[2] and philologists know that of all European languages the Slavo-

[1] C. C. Tacitus, "De moribus Germanorum," cap. xlvi. "Peucinorum Venedorumque et Fennorum nationes Germanis an Sarmatis adscribam, dubito. . . . Venedi multum ex moribus traxerunt . . . inter Germanos potius referuntur, quia et domos fingunt," etc. . . . "Germani" here is taken as a generic appellation for all European "barbarians" (who evidently are not differentiated in Tacitus' mind), whereas, "Sarmati" designates Asiatic "barbarians." The "Venedi," whatever their nationality, by the fact of being called "Germani" are classified among those whom the historian opposes to the "Sarmati," *i.e.* among Europeans. As to the identification of the "Venedi" with the Slavonians, we rely upon Solovieff ("History of Russia," vol. i, ch. iii), who bases himself on: Pliny, "Hist. Nat." 1, iv, c. 13. Tacit. "Germ." vi, c. 7. Ptolem. "Geogr." 1, iii, c. 5; 1, v, c. 9. Peripl. in Geogr. veteris Script. graeci minores." ed. Hudson, 1, 54–57. Jornandes, "De Getarum origine et rebus gestis," c. 5.

[2] On the Slavonians: Zeuss, "Die Deutschen und die Nachbarstämme," 1837. Sourovetsky (translated by Schaffarik) "Ueber die Abkunft der Slaven." Ofen, 1828.

nian idioms stand the nearest to the old Indo-Iranian stock.[1]

As you see, Tacitus does not mention the Slavonians as moving from Asia; when he knows them they are already incorporated in Europe and they are one of the elements by which Europe resists Asiatic incursions. Nothing is known as to the date of their exodus from the common Indo-Aryan cradle, nothing about their march westward, and the first independent act of the Slavonians, registered by history, is on the contrary their migration from the slopes of the Carpathians down into the valleys of the Dniester and the Dnieper,[2] consequently a movement eastward.[3] This is significant and commands the attention of anyone who has meditated on the destinies of nations and the development of the great historical lines.

The migratory movement of humanity has always been from the east westward, and not only men but all living beings, all animal and vegetable species, according to the statements of natural science, have followed the same direction — "the direction of the sun" as we commonly say. It is even considered one of the conditions of successful colonization — to follow consciously the direction of the universal movement.[4] With regard

[1] On Slavonic language: Miklosich, "Lautlehre der altslavonischen Sprache." "Formlehre der altslavonischen Sprache." Vienna, 1850. "Slavische Bibliothek oder Beiträge zur slavonischen Philologie und Geschichte," 2 B. Vienna, 1851–1858. And numerous smaller writings by the same on more special questions of Slavonic philology.

[2] "The presence of the Slavonians in the Danube region in ancient times has left clear traces in the names of towns." (S. Solovieff, "Hist. of Russia," vol. i, chap. iii.) See Schaffarik (Šafařik), "Slavische Alterthümer," 2 B. Leipzig, 1843–1844.

[3] S. Solovieff, op. cit.

[4] Basile Conta, "Théorie de l'ondulation universelle." Paris, 1895. The

to the movements of the European nations within the limits of the old continent, we may observe, that for those of them which have followed the universal, the physical law, the westward direction has always been a source of mental growth, whereas the opposite tendency led to a field of sharing; we might characterize the two directions by saying thus, the movement of a European nation eastward is educating, whereas the movement westward is self-educating. I wish to submit this question which throws such an interesting light on Russia's destiny to the attention of those interested in philosophy of history; they may take these facts as a starting-point, far more, as a basis for their judgment of the different events of Russian history — and I feel entitled to assert that they will not draw a false conclusion even if not very well versed in facts. Any *a priori* statement which they may establish on that basis will find its posterior justification. Goethe's words may be applied in full security: "Was der Geist verspricht, das hält die Natur." (That which the mind promises, nature keeps.) Those who may consider Russian history and especially Russian politics from the point of view of the westward and eastward tendencies of the human races will see that they have struck the key-note of that people whose ancestry, at the beginning of the seventh century, moved from the lower course of the Danube, and which, at the end of the nineteenth century, becomes the arbiter between China and Japan.

In their march eastward the ancient Slavonians moved gradually, and during the two centuries of their migration they founded a succession of states which settled

Greek colonies in Asia Minor in antiquity and Australia in modern times seem to offer the only examples contradicting the above statement.

down while the others were continuing their way. Thus arose one after the other, the Samo, the Chrobatian, the Servian, the Great Moravian, and finally the Russian state. You remember that the date of 862 is the one which marks the beginning of our history; the event which stands in connection with this date is known as "the calling of the princes." This is how the old chronicles relate the story of Russia's origin.

The tribes which lived along the course of the Dnieper and its tributaries, exhausted by continuous incursions on one another and molested by their nomadic neighbours, decide to send a deputation over sea to Norway to choose a sovereign among the Varegues. "Our land is vast and fertile, but no order in it—do come and rule over us." So the deputies said when they stood before Rurik, chief of the Norman tribe called Russ; and Prince Rurik came over, settled at Novgorod, and started the Russian state.[1]

This fact is one of those vulnerable points of our history which have the property of unchaining endless polemics. The national party feels hurt in its patriotism by that "Norman theory" which confers on foreigners the honour of having been the founders of Russia. Lomonosov was the first to start the alarm in the last century, and since then discussions have never ceased. We will not enter into the fastidious controversies round the question whether the word "Varegue" is the name of a tribe or a military denomination, whether Rurik

[1] On Russia's origin: W. Thomsen, "Ursprung des russischen Staates," 1879. A. A. Kunik, "Die Berufung der Schvedo-Russen durch die Finnen und Slovenen," St. Petersburg, 1844–1845. Ewers, "Veritische Vorarbeiten zur Geschichte der Russen." Krug, "Forschungen," 2 B. St. Petersburg, 1848.

comes from Norway or from actual Prussia; whether he is a Norman or a Slavonian. Is it really so very humiliating to have one's history begin with a foreign dominion? Which is the European nation whose history begins otherwise? Anglo-Saxons, Franks and Celts, Germans and Romans — all European nations are the result of invasions, conflicts, fusions.

It is as if Nature would not permit an act of national self-generation. Ancient Romans were not less proud than we are, and still their national feeling did not interfere when popular fiction connected their origin with the foundation of Alba Longa by Æneas, the unfortunate exile of destroyed Troy, for they knew that even the most fantastic legend conforms with Nature's laws.

The Varegues were no new-comers in the country. When the successors of Rurik, abandoning Novgorod, moved down to Kiev, they found many of their own people settled there, for since many years the great river Dnieper had become a commercial passage from Norway down to the Black Sea and to the splendid and opulent chief town of the Byzantine Empire; this was such a powerful point of attraction that this early period of our history is full of raids on Byzantium. But this half-commercial, half-military intercourse with the eastern Roman Empire was destined to have a greater importance. Pascal says that rivers are walking roads — by that walking road, the Dnieper, Christianity entered Russia.

It did not enter at once. From the beginning of the tenth century it infiltrates by individual cases; in the middle of the century there was already a church in Kiev (consecrated to St. Elijah). In 957 Princess Olga, mother of the ruling Prince Sviatoslav (Rurik's

grandson), goes to Byzantium to be baptized in the Christian faith; the Emperor himself is her godfather.[1] Her son did not consent to give up the paganism of his forefathers, but her grandson, Prince Vladimir, sent ambassadors to investigate the religions of foreign countries. When they came back, they said to their prince: "No man would like to eat bitter after having tasted honey, so we cannot think of returning to our gods after having witnessed the divine service of the Greek." The service which made such a profound impression on Vladimir's ambassadors was the solemn liturgy celebrated by the Patriarch of Constantinople in the presence of the two brother-emperors Constantine and Basil, under the dome of St. Sophia. Vladimir decided to embrace the Christian religion and to request the Byzantine emperors that they would provide for the baptism of his people. But he did not care to take up the part of a simple solicitor; so he marched with his soldiers against Chersonesos, a Greek colony, on the coast of the present Crimea, intending in the case of success to make of the new religion a sort of military contribution. The plan was carried out, Chersonesos was taken, and ambassadors were sent to Constantinople to ask the Emperor's sister Anna in marriage for Prince Vladimir. The change of religion was required as the condition from the Emperor's side, and when Vladimir assented, a Greek bishop came over

[1] In the following poetical terms does the old chronicler picture the significance of Princess Olga's baptism. "She was the forerunner of Christianity in Russia, as the morning star is the precursor of the sun, and the dawn the precursor of the day. As the moon shines at midnight she shone in the midst of a pagan people. She was like a pearl amid dirt, for the people were in the mire of their sins and not purified by baptism. She purified herself in a holy bath and removed the garb of sin of the old man Adam."

to Chersonesos. A fine church at a short distance from Sebastopol contains in our days the marble basin wherein the baptizer of Russia was baptized in the Christian faith. When Vladimir returned to Kiev the whole population was gathered into the Dnieper, parted in different groups, every group received a new name, and all were baptized in the Christian faith. This was in 987. When in the next century the dissensions between Constantinople and Rome brought about the great scission of the Christian Church, Russia, as the god-daughter of Byzantium, followed her example and ever since has refused acknowledgment of the Pope's supremacy.

Vladimir becomes a zealous Christian; thanks to him, churches, cathedrals, monasteries spring up on the picturesque bank of the Dnieper, and Kiev becomes and remains till this hour a point of pilgrimage for the whole country. After his death the Grand Duke Vladimir, canonized by the Church, becomes one of the most revered saints, but he becomes also the centre of national epic poetry. Let us take this double character of Vladimir's memory as a guidepost for our further investigations; let us examine first the activity stirred up by the newly imported religion, and let us then pass over to the native elements which find expression for themselves in national poetry.

The first agents of the preaching of Christianity were the Greek clergy; the channel by which it entered people's consciences was the Slavonic translation of the Bible effected by the two Greek brothers Cyril and Methodius, a century before, for the use of the Moravians;[1] the hearths whence Christianity irradiated to

[1] See Louis Léger, "Cyrile et Méthode." Paris, 1868.

spread over the country were monasteries. We hardly can realize the importance of monasteries at that time, in a country where there were no schools, no trace of learning, a country whose national self-consciousness was only just beginning to awake, and had no moral centre to converge to, a country whose greatest part was plunged in deepest night of paganism, and whose population was in full activity of poetical creation, composing those songs which were to become the lay collaborators of the clergy in educating future generations.

The monastery is the summit of everything at that time: it accumulates all virtue, all learning, and, we might as well say, all power, for except in warfare the advice of those learned men who lived in prayer and fasting was often asked and followed by the princes. The princes themselves gravitate to the monastery; the two powers respectively attract each other; the princes, having been the first to enjoy the benefits of learning, become by right of intellectual aristocracy the immediate accessories of the monks outside the monastery's gates; they often themselves resemble monastic warriors or martial monks. Such are the conditions of individual life in the early age of nations: a man cannot provide for his physical necessities unless he fights: he cannot read a book unless he becomes a monk; the gradual attenuation of these two extremes is what we call civilization, and its degree can be measured by the facility with which both physical and intellectual necessities can be satisfied without encroaching upon each other.

The literature which originated and grew in the monasteries consisted either of translations from the Greek, or of original writings; the first became the pat-

terns imitated by the latter. It was of sacred character; lives of saints, sermons, descriptions of pilgrimages, etc. All these writings in the impressions they produce present a strange combination of a sort of affected didacticism (inevitable in any literature of imitative character), and of a genuine artlessness and freshness which find way through the exigences of a severe form imported by foreign teachers.[1]

Amidst the rude specimens of ecclesiastical eloquence of that time the sermon of Bishop Ilarion (1051), "On the law and the grace," stands apart from all else, and forms in its way a literary phenomenon. "If you translate it into modern Russian," says a critic, "you may take it for a discourse of Karamsin's,—so beautifully eloquent it is and so masterly composed."[2]

A great charm emanates from the description of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem by the Prior Daniel.[3] The humble monk writes down all he has seen in order to give a spiritual satisfaction to those who would like, "though with their bodies remaining at home," to make a mental pilgrimage to Jerusalem, "for many people," he says, "attain the Holy Land not by travelling, but simply by their good deeds." Interesting are the historical particulars of his sojourn in Palestine: the kindness of King Baldwin of Jerusalem, who invited the Russian pilgrim to accompany him in his expedi-

[1] See Schaffarik (Šafarik) "Uebersicht der ältesten kirchslavonischen Literatur." Leipzig, 1848.

[2] Goloubinsky, "History of the Russian Church." 2 vols. Moscow, 1880 (Russian).

[3] French translation by A. Norov, "Igoumène russe, Pélerinage en Terre Sainte au commencement du xii siècle (1113-1115)," St. Petersburg, 1864. German transl. by A. Leskien in "Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästinavereins," B. vii. Leipzig, 1884.

tion to Damascus; touching is his constant preoccupation with his own people left at home; the recital of how he went to the market, how he bought a big crystal hanging lamp, how he filled it with oil — "pure oil, without water" — how he placed it at the foot of our Lord's Sepulchre, — "and there it was lighted," he adds, "in the name of all the Russian princes, of all the Russian land, and all the Christians of the Russian land." [1]

Parallel with this strictly religious literature, in the ecclesiastic sense of the word, a collateral popular religious literature developed. From the very first the inquiring mind of the early Christians had been interested in those facts of the holy history which are only mentioned but not described in the Scriptures; and in Russia, as in Western Europe, a great many writings appear as a sort of supplement to the Bible. Among these apocryphas we must mention the very popular "Wandering of God's Mother through the Tortures" (twelfth century). The Virgin Mary one day after her assumption, attended by the Archangel Michael, undertakes to visit all who are suffering in the different circles of hell. When she returns from her doleful peregrination and stands in the presence of Jesus Christ, she intercedes for the unfortunate sinners. The Son of God, "for the sake of His Father's mercy, for the sake of His Mother's prayer, for the sake of Michael, the Archangel, and for the sake of all the Saints," releases the sinners from pains for fifty-two days, — from Good Thursday to Pentecost.

[1] It is worthy of note that with his epic style the author of the "Pilgrimage" combines such topographical precision that even to-day the French Dominicans in their archæological researches rely upon it.

This apocryphical literature had a great influence on the imaginative spirit of the people, and brought about a kind of poetry which we might call "ecclesiastic folk-lore"; and which we shall examine later.

The most precious relics, transmitted to us by the diligence of the monks, are the annals of our history. Observed by ocular witnesses or gathered from others' recitals, the turbulent events of those ages are introduced under the silent vaults of the cell, and, by the trembling light of the oil-lamp, fixed by a pious hand on the yellow parchment. The oldest annals are those by Nestor, a monk of the eleventh century, who is revered as the "father of Russian history," and the oldest transcript of his annals is a manuscript of 1377, consequently almost three hundred years later than the original.[1] Its title in an approximate translation would read as follows: "Narration of Times of Yore: about how Russia came to life, about who was the first to rule in Kiev, and how the Russian country began to be."[2] Like all chroniclers of all countries, Nestor begins his narration from the Biblical times, viz., with Noah, and in following up the different descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth in their wanderings he gets to the Slavonians and finally to the Russians.

Two hundred and sixty years of our history are described by him, — from 850 to 1110; of the last forty years he speaks as an ocular witness.[3]

[1] Russia's oldest written document is the so-called "Gospel of Ostromir" — the text of the gospel transcribed by a deacon called Gregory, for Ostromir, provost of Novgorod, in 1056–1057. It is preserved in the Imperial Public Library at St. Petersburg.

[2] French translation by Louis Léger. Paris, Leroux, 1884.

[3] Russian chronicles precede by one century the first French chronicle by Villehardouin (d. 1213) and the first Italian annals by Matteo Spi-

Many followed Nestor's example; others transcribed or compiled in chronological order disjointed fragments of older annals, wishing as one of them says "to gather all these flowers into one verbal basket." Thus, an uninterrupted thread of chronicles runs through the whole history, dying away towards the last years of the seventeenth century. With the continuous process of copying, a sort of superposition could not help forming over the original text; later investigations and discoveries have undermined the reliability of some of the narrations regarding the earliest times, still they remain unaltered at the bottom of our national creed: science may show us as clearly as two and two are four, that we were oysters before we evolved into human shape, —we shall never cease admiring Raphael's frescos representing the six days of the creation.[1]

It is hard for one not familiar with the text to form an idea of the impression produced by these annals; the simplicity and majesty of the language,[2] joined to a complete absence of literary effort and any personal element,[3] are of such power that a few quotations in a page of modern Russian text communicate a peculiar

nella (1247–1268). One of the earliest German chronicles dates from the fourteenth century (Johann Riedesel, of Hess, d. 1341). Chronicles contemporary with that of Nestor were transcribed only in two languages: Greek in Byzantium, Latin in the rest of Europe.

[1] One of the best researches on Russian chronicles is the work of Schloezer: "Nestor. Russische Annalen in ihrer Slavischen Grundsprache verglichen, übersetzt und erklärt." 5 B. Göttingen, 1805–1809.

[2] Fr. Miklosich, "Ueber die Sprache der ältesten russischen Chronisten, vorzüglich Nestor's." Vienna, 1855.

[3] Impersonality is the characteristic feature by which Russian annals differ from the western as those by Villehardouin, Joinville, Froissart, Giovanni Villani, and others.

dignity to the style of the simplest manual of Russian history.[1]

Such were the chief elements of the intellectual life which developed on the basis of the newly imported Byzantine Christianity. Let us now follow them up outside the threshold of the convent, and let us see what resulted from their encounter with the genuine currents of poetical creation working in the people.

We said awhile ago that Christianity found this people in the full activity of its imaginative powers; this produced a very strange conflict, or rather fusion, at the cost of reciprocal concessions or compromises between the new religion and the preceding divinizing of Nature's powers. The life of the people was full of ceremonies and rites, by which it used to celebrate all the events of existence from birth to death; all this could not be uprooted at once, and, incapable of giving up their habits, the people incorporated them into the new religion.

Many customs, such as dancing, singing certain songs, jumping over burning piles, collecting certain plants, were transported to Christian holidays, — the mere agreement in the phonetic consonants of the name of a Christian saint and that of a former God being often a sufficient reason for such a transplantation; all festivities in honour of the summer were grouped round St. John's day (24th of June); the prophet Elijah took the place of the former god of thunder, and even to-day popular superstition identifies thunder with the rolling of Elijah's fire-wheeled chariot. By and by the old significance faded away from the people's memory: that

[1] According to a critic the style of Nestor's annals could have arisen only under the influence of a close acquaintance with the Bible. Shevyrioff, "History of Russian Literature." 4 vols. Moscow, 1860 (Russian).

which was a rite centuries ago survives as an ordinary amusement, with no inner meaning, and simply connected with a certain date or a certain time of the year.[1] But the clergy had to fight for a long time against what received the alarming and suggestive name of "duple-creed."

Strange to say, in spite of this vitality of the ritual side of paganism, the people's spiritual interest was radically turned towards Christian subjects; we might say that elements of the old creed kept hold of the people's memory, whereas Christianity took hold of its imagination. This is a side of the question that has not been appreciated by those of our critics who deplore the insufficiency of the Christian culture at that time and accuse our early clergy of inactivity. A whole world of poetical creation, something like a "religious folk-lore," stands there to indicate that, whatever the poverty of missionary means was, however vague the first delineation of the Christian code of morality, Christianity in the person of its founders and in the events of its history had become a constant companion of national thought; however fantastic sometimes the subjects of these songs, however skin-deep the comprehension of the real Christian spirit, they spread the names and facts, they made them familiar to the people, they prepared for the acceptance of the law's spirit; it was like a self-education of a big child: popular imagination became the missionary of popular belief. Let us mention a few of these "religious poems," and first of all that touching song called

[1] On Slavonic mythology: Dr. Gr. Krek, "Einleitung in die Slavische Literaturgeschichte." Gratz, 1887. Louis Léger, "Esquisse sommaire de la mythologie Slave," in "Nouvelles études slaves." 2d série. Paris, 1886.

"Adam's Lament," which begins with the desperate call of a man who feels the irreparability of his loss:—

Paradise, my paradise,
Beautiful my paradise!
For my sake,
Paradise, thou wert created,
By Eve's fault,
Paradise, thou hast been closed!

Joseph is a popular personage, Solomon is a favourite; the chief events of the New Testament, the Annunciation, St. John the Precursor, the Baptism of our Lord, Christmas, are all treated as subjects for poetry. The "Song of the Dove-Book" unrolls a curious scheme of cosmogony. A book falls down from heaven, and fantastic kings from David to Vladimir gather round it and by reading it learn all that is going on everywhere "even in the depths"; a queer geography appears in this anachronistic story, where Jerusalem is taken as the "umbilicus of the earth," and where the river Jordan flows out of the lake Ilmen, — the one near which Rurik settled down.[1]

Parallel with this poetry, which is an evident result of imported literary influence, we see the vigorous upspringing of genuine epic poetry. The chief motive of the so-called "Kievcycle" is the fighting with the Mongolian tribes of the east or, according to the expression of one of our critics, the fight with the desert.[2] We touch here one of the manifestations of the secular struggle between Europe and Asia, which began

[1] On Russia's apocryphal literature: M. Gastner, "Ilchester lectures on Greco-Slavonic literature and its relation to the folk-lore of Europe during the Middle Ages." London, 1887.

[2] A quite different character is presented by the "Novgorod Cycle"; this commercial republic, which belonged to the Hanseatic League, and

under the walls of Troy and remains undecided until to-day.

Ilia Mouromets is the most typical and popular figure of the Kiev epopee: a peasant-hero, not a warrior, with a sense of justice and a natural aversion to all iniquity; simple-hearted, good-natured, never making a fuss about his exploits, he rides along on his steed, and with that supernatural strength with which two unknown beggar-travellers one day endowed him by means of a beverage, he fights against evil, and protects misery and weakness; cheerful and jolly, of pleasant company, he becomes a favourite at Prince Vladimir's table, commanding respect from everyone and keeping a sort of rank of his own among the noble members of the Prince's household. If Ilia is the soul of the epopee, Vladimir is its centre. The hospitable court of the Grand Duke of Kiev, where once a week a table is dressed for the "boyars" and the doors of the kitchen always stand open for the poor, is the converging point where all heroes gather; it is to their Prince's service they bring their physical strength, it is for his glory they fight, for "Vladimir, our beautiful sun," is the hope and joy of everybody, he is the light of the country, the smile of the people; other princes scarcely exist, he counts for all Russia, and centuries after he has died he is still *the* Grand Duke of Kiev. Thus anticipating history, popular fiction accomplished in the Kiev-period that union of the country which actually was secured only in the middle of the Moscovite period.

The characteristic of the Russian epopee consists in

flourished till the end of the fifteenth century, brought to life a sort of poetry we might call "commercial epopee" as a contrast to the "heroic epopee" of Kiev.

the fact that, while in Western Europe the epic songs had become the prey of individual poets and thus were transmitted to print, not as popular productions, but as literary compositions, our epopees preserved their virgin freshness till the very moment they were fixed by print. The writing down of our epic songs began in the last century, though at first with no great result; towards the middle of the present century, however, a few zealous seekers, exploring the northern provinces of Russia, succeeded in discovering positively inexhaustible treasures of epic poetry, which were brought to light hardly more than twenty years ago.

In the course of forty-eight days, one Hilferding, to whom we owe the most valuable discoveries in this line, came across seventy peasant singers, and wrote down more than three hundred songs. This was in the province of Olonets, far to the north of Russia, while in the province of Kiev, in the land of their birth, not one has been gathered. Why this migration of national poetry, why this flight of the popular songs into the inaccessible forests? Perhaps the clergy looked with an unfavourable eye on what they considered a profane amusement; perhaps, when those political struggles began which tormented Kiev and Moscow, they were passed over and entrusted to those quiet regions of the north; perhaps they themselves had the presentiment that it would be better to fly and to hide in the deep forests, before they should be pursued and dispersed by the piercing whistle of civilization at whose approach so many songs have died away, so many dreams have vanished.[1]

[1] On the Russian folk-lore: W. R. S. Ralston, "Russian folk-tales." London, 1873. "Songs of the Russian People." London, 1872. Miss

Such was the field on which popular creative forces exercised themselves, and such were the plants this field produced. Of course we can only touch on this subject in such a concise and rapid sketch.

We must now say a word on the only specimen of individual poetical creation we possess of the ante-Mongolian period, not because it is the only remaining one, but because it is unique in every way and because so powerful is its poetical force as to make it to-day and forever one of the finest jewels of our literature.

"The Word about Igor's Fights,"[1] relates the story of an unsuccessful expedition of Prince Igor's, in 1185, against the Polovtsy, one of the nomadic tribes, his march, his defeat, the lament of his wife Yaroslavna, who waits for him on the city walls of Poutivl, his flight, and his return. The wonderful impression produced by this simple story lies in a poetical breath of an almost savage impetuosity, unbridled, irresistible, which imbues with the animating force of its mythological imagination anything it touches: the hours of the day, the twilight, the wind, the desert, the river, the grass, — all is animated and vibrates and lives up to a harmony of sympathy with man. New romanticism with its

Isabel F. Hapgood, "The Epic Songs of Russia." New York, 1886. Rambaud, "La Russie Epique." Paris, 1876. Tiander, "Russische Volks-Epopeen." St. Petersburg, 1894. Bodenstedt, "Die poetische Ukraine." 1845. W. Wollner, "Untersuchungen über die Volksepic der Grossrussen." Leipzig, 1879. Valuable information on Slavonic philology, poetry, history, etc., in Prof. Jagic's periodical, "Archiv für slavische Philologie." Vienna.

[1] Miss Hapgood in her introduction to the "Epic Songs of Russia," translates: "Word of Igor's Troop." The author commits the very common error of taking the word "polk" in its present significance, "regiment," whereas it formerly meant "expedition." We thought this latter a rather modern expression and substituted for it "fights."

attempts at animating Nature by awakening the shallow phantoms of ancient legends has never succeeded in imposing upon us as powerfully the illusion of Nature's participation in human life, as this poem, where flowers in the field fade for sorrow. I pick out at random these few lines describing the beginning of a battle:—

> Lo!
> Stribog's[1] children take their flight:
> Blowing winds,—they carry arrows,
> Send them straight on Igor's army. . . .
> Muddy yellow grow the rivers,
> Moans the field and dust arises,
> And already through the dust
> You may see the flapping banners!

Wonderful are the descriptions of the prairies,[2] the nomadic camp, the noise of the grass when the tents are moved, the creaking of the wheels like the noise of swans' wings: nothing is left unobserved, and everything is vivified by the poet's imagination. This poem was discovered in 1795; the original, a manuscript of the fourteenth century, perished in the great fire of Moscow at the time of Napoleon's invasion in 1812;[3] the author is unknown, but undoubtedly contemporary with the events described. Unfortunately it stands alone; all critics agree that it must be considered as a fragment of a whole cycle of military epopees which must have flourished in the immediate surrounding of the Prince.[4] We have finished with the poetical pro-

[1] A mythological divinity, father of the winds (the Greek Æolus).

[2] "Seven and a half centuries before Gogol had dashed off his pictures of South Russian steppes, the author of the 'Word about Igor's Fights' already made us feel their beauty." S. Shevyrioff, op. cit.

[3] A transcript was found among the papers of Catherine the Great.

[4] French translations (more or less complete and satisfactory): Eich-

ductions of the time; the last poem brings us back to history.

The political power in those days was represented by two elements: the so-called "veche," the people's assembly, and the prince. Their respective situation was not firmly established and much depended upon the personal character of the prince: if the latter was strong, he commanded the veche; if he was weak, he was controlled and often deprived of power and expelled. The assembly had no regular organization; people were called together by the ringing of the church bell; they gathered on the public place, they decided upon questions of war and peace; no regular proceedings were held, and discussion often ended with fisticuffs. Yet in some towns, namely in Novgorod and Pskoff, the veche had grown to a quite independent political power. Under the influence of the Tartar yoke it gradually lost its significance and died away with the increasing absorption of the minor princedoms by Moscow.

The Russian prince of the ante-Mongolian period is a type which does not repeat itself in posterior history. Whether Normans or not, they preserve till the thirteenth century that same spirit of romantic adventurousness which animates the companions of William the Conqueror or Robert Guiscard, that same thirst for military glory which induces those children of the north to insert among the pages of history that fairy tale which is the Norman Kingdom of Sicily. The condition of the

horf, "Histoire de la langue et de la littérature des slaves." Paris, 1839. Mickievicz, "Les Slaves." Paris, 1849. Rambaud, "La Russie Epique." Paris, 1876. Barghon, Fort Rion. Paris, 1876. German translation with Slavonic text, glossary, and commentaries, by Dr. August Boltz. Berlin, 1854.

country, alas, favoured their belligerency only too much. Towards the middle of the eleventh century the descendants of Rurik grew to a numerous family; each member of this family had his own apanaged principality, but they were seldom satisfied and it was a hard task for the Grand Duke of Kiev to hold them in good order. The situation became complicated chiefly in consequence of the strange order of succession to the grand-ducal throne of Kiev. It did not pass to the eldest son, but to the eldest member of the whole family — generally to the late Grand Duke's brother, and only after all the brothers had ruled came the turn of the eldest son. This order of succession, by which uncles had precedence over nephews and which became a source of continuous discord, is the inner spring which imparts to this so-called "period of apanages" its turbulent activity.[1]

The only good side of this state of things from the political point of view was that this centripetal tendency of the princes towards Kiev, entering the people's consciousness, became one of the agents of the idea of national unity. In those days only few grand dukes succeeded, by imposing their authority upon the members of their family, in securing for the country periods of relative tranquillity. Among these were Yaroslav the Wise, and Vladimir Monomah.

With the name of Yaroslav stands connected the name of the "Russian law," the first attempt of Russian juridical codification. In its general spirit and very

[1] The numerous hypotheses by which the "system of apanages" has been explained are summed up by W. R. S. Ralston: "Early Russian History." On the same epoch: Evers, "Studien zur gründlichen Kenntniss der Vorzeit Russland's." Dorpat, 1830.

often in its details the "Russian law" presents a remarkable accord with the early legislation of other European countries, especially with the Frank and Anglo-Saxon laws. It would take us too long to enter into all the particulars of this interesting document, yet we must underline on our way its chief features.

"Capital seems to be the most privileged person in this legislation." So says one of our historians,[1] and indeed its commercial, matter-of-fact character is what strikes us most. Pecuniary fine is the punishment even in cases of murder (it is called "vira,"—the "Wehrgeld" of the Germans), and pecuniary or material loss is what measures the degree of guilt. Civil law and criminal law are scarcely differentiated, yet a faint indication of the difference can be traced in those few cases where the crime is punished with a double fine,—one part going to the sufferer in compensation for his loss, the other to the prince as satisfaction for the offence against abstract morality. The so-called "blood vengeance" in virtue of which the assassin may be killed by the relations of his victim is legalized by the code, just as in the ancient Swedish law. It was, however, abolished under Yaroslav's children. Capital punishment as an impersonal agent of justice does not exist. Three social classes distinctly appear from this legislation. Those who are in the immediate surrounding of the prince and compose the "droujina,"—his soldiers' company of Varegue extraction. Then comes the class of ordinary free men, mainly hereditary farmers, on the prince's land, which returns to the prince if male heirs should be wanting; their life is

[1] Kluchevsky. Course of lectures on Russian History, delivered at the Moscow University in 1882–1883.

estimated at half as much as the life of the farmer. Lastly the serfs form a class which has neither property nor rights;[1] the murder of a serf and the theft of a beaver are punished with an equal fine. Woman is always taxed half as much as man, but a woman's finger or nose is taxed the same as a man's. The Russian law in this case does not enter into such minute details as the German, which has a different tariff for every finger in proportion to its importance.

Property seems to have had a stronger guarantee than life: rules of pecuniary transactions, commercial fellowships, rights and order of succession, are firmly established.[2] The theft of a horse is punished with the loss of all rights, property, and liberty (consider that ancient Saxon legislation inflicted capital punishment for the same crime). An interesting feature is the respect for foreigners: whereas two witnesses are sufficient to establish the guiltiness of a native, no less than seven are required when it is a foreigner or a Varegue. The privileged position accorded to the Varegue reminds one of the Salic law where the life of the Frank was taxed the double of the Gallo-Roman's life.[3] From this short glimpse you may see that the moral educatory power of the code is not of great importance; it certainly had its practical influence on the people's customs, but it did not aim at the very root of criminal tendencies; it did not

[1] These slaves, who were supplied by prisoners of war or insolvent debtors, and were comparatively few in number, must not be confounded with the later serfs, — peasants who were bound to the soil at the end of the sixteenth century and emancipated in 1861. (See Lecture VIII.)

[2] J. Hube, "Geschichtliche Darstellung der Erbfolgerechte der Slaven." Posen, 1836.

[3] The comparisons with the Germanic and other laws are based on the "Appendix" to Vol. I of Karamsin's "History of the Russian State."

say: "Don't do so and so, because it is wrong," but, as the above-quoted writer remarks, "It seemed to say: 'Do whatever you like, but here is the tariff.'"[1]

Yaroslav's grandson, Vladimir Monomah, is the other prince of this epoch to whom we owe special attention. He is the typical prince, the favourite, the beloved one, but, better than from anything we might say, his figure will appear from that famous document known as "Monomah's will." In a short instruction the venerable father gives to his children precepts of morality and piety, illustrating them with autobiographical examples. So dignified is the style, so sincere the profound conviction in the beneficence of his advice, so humble the whole spirit, that these autobiographical strokes do not produce the slightest impression of boastfulness; whatever exploit he may relate, whether his eighty campaigns against the Polovtsy, whether the great dangers he had run while hunting, he always remains the same noble character, recommending to his children never to forget to say their prayers; "even when you ride and are not speaking to anybody, instead of thinking rubbish, at least repeat these simple words: 'God be merciful unto me,'—this is the best of all prayers." "Don't think, my children," says he, "or anyone else, who may read these lines, that I make a show of my own fearlessness, I simply praise the merciful Lord for having preserved me during so many years. . . . The only thing I wish is that, after having read this epistle, you should perform all manner of good deeds, praising God and his Saints."

Poor people, widows, children, are objects of his solici-

[1] On Russian ancient domestic life: Ewers, "Das älteste Recht der Russen." Dorpat, 1826.

tude. Hospitality and sociability are recommended as virtues: "Never let anyone pass, without giving him a greeting, but have a good word for every man. . . . Honour the aged as a father, honour the young as a brother." He never travelled without a copy of David's Psalms, his favourite reading; he was one of the most learned men of his time, though second to his father Vsevolod, of whom he says, that without having been abroad he spoke five languages. "Let the sunrise never find you in bed," he says to his children, and he himself sets the example. All his time, all his thought were given to his country, and the chronicles keep a warm remembrance of him who "expended so much sweat for the sake of the Russian land."

Vladimir Monomah was the last on the throne of Kiev who exercised a sufficient authority to command respect in the minor princes. After his death in 1125, intestine quarrels break out and the material unity of the country which was only just realizing the idea of its moral unity is so weakened, that when in 1224 the Tartar appears on the horizon, the princes have no energy for community of action; they are defeated one by one, and in the first part of the thirteenth century the great Mongolian invasion plunges the country into the deep night of a barbaric tyranny.

Such was the inner development of the country during the so-called ante-Mongolian period. From what has been said we may form an idea of its situation with regard to other European countries. Though quite a young state, Russia enters into commercial and diplomatic intercourse with her neighbours, and intermarriages with other reigning houses are maintained throughout the whole period. In 911 a treaty

is concluded with Byzantium, sanctioned by Prince Oleg[1] and the Emperor Alexander. You remember Princess Olga's baptism at Constantinople; Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenetus in his book on the ceremonies of the Byzantine court gives interesting accounts of the festivities in her honour.[2] A few years later she sends envoys to the German King (later Emperor) Otto the Great. Vladimir marries the Greek princess Anna and through her sister Theophano becomes the brother-in-law of Otto II. Yaroslav's eldest daughter Elisabeth marries the Norwegian King Harold, her sister Anna becomes Queen of France by marrying Henry I,[3] Anastasia the youngest sister marries Andrew I of Hungaria. Vladimir Monomah's mother was the daughter of the Byzantine Emperor Constantine Monomachus, and Vladimir himself was married to the daughter of the unfortunate King Harold, who perished at Hastings.[4] All this shows how, in spite of the continuous incursions of nomadic tribes of Asia, the country kept up an uninterrupted intercourse with Western Europe. If we may say so, the doors of the country stood open during all that time.

[1] Oleg, uncle of Igor Rurik's son, ruled during his minority.

[2] "De ceremoniis aulæ Byzantinæ." Lib. ii, cap. 15, ed. Bonn. Among these ceremonies, strange to say, the Emperor does not mention the ceremony of Olga's baptism. We have to infer therefore either that she was twice to Constantinople or that she was baptized in some other place (Goloubinsky, op. cit.).

[3] A fac-simile of her signature in Slavonic character under a certificate of the abbey of Saint-Crépin de Soisson, dated 1063, is reproduced in "La Russie." Paris, 1891, p. 474.

[4] On the connections of Russian legends, folk-lore, and early history with Norway, Denmark, and other northern countries: "Antiquités Russes, ed. par la Société Royale des antiquités du nord." 2 vols. Copenhagen, 1850–1852.

But there comes the great incursion from the desert, the whole country is turned on her axis and all at once she faces Asia instead of Europe. She remains so for over two hundred years, and when she recovers and looks round her, a wall has arisen between her and Europe. It required another two hundred years for this wall to be shattered and thrown down.

We have finished with the Kiev period of the Russian history. Out of the barbaric gloom "golden-headed Moscow" dawns.

LECTURE III

(1224-1613)

The Tartar yoke. Europe and Asia — secular struggle. The rise and growth of Moscow. The policy of the first Moscovian princes and the "collecting of the Russian land." Inner currents of social classes.

John III — first sovereign of unified Russia. Diplomatic and commercial intercourse with Europe.

John IV the Terrible — first Tsar of Russia. A characteristic. Art in history and history in art. Intellectual culture of the time. A parallel.

LECTURE III

(1224–1613)

Moskva! How much in that one sound
Is rooted for a Russian heart!
How many echoes it contains! . .

—POUSHKIN.

A BREATH of terror seems to run through those pages of our chronicles which relate the events from 1224 to 1240. In the solitude of his cell the old monk, who has retired from the world, feels only too intensely the synthetic significance of those single facts which he fixes on the venerable parchments. The atrocities of the invasion, the massacres, the fires which strike others in their individual feelings of family and home, wound the lonely and homeless hermit in his love for his fatherland; and the tears of the whole country call upon God from those pages where the disasters of the barbaric invasion appear in the terrific simplicity of the artless narration.

After a series of incursions in the southeastern part of the country the Tartar hordes at last reach the lower bank of the Dnieper and pitch their camp opposite Kiev. "The creaking of the cars, the bellowing of the oxen, and the roaring of the camels was such," says the chronicler, "that the citizens could not hear each other's voices." A desperate resistance and never-ceasing prayer in all churches and convents did not

save the town: when the Tartar retired and the last clouds of dust had vanished, swallowed up by the desert horizon, Kiev lay in ashes. "The sun perished all over the country," exclaims the chronicler, "the living were envying the dead."[1] But the chronicler did not know that the invasion whose furious waves, rolling over the country, were shattering against the walls of his cell, was itself the last wave of that moving ocean known as the great migration of nations; and another thing the chronicler could not know is that this invasion, which was to open a period of two centuries of oppression for his fatherland, was only one of the acts in the secular struggle of two continents.

In mythological times the Greeks go to Troy, Europe marches against Asia to vindicate the honour of a European woman, which, by the way, according to Herodotus,[2] the Persians thought a very foolish idea. In antiquity the Persians invade Greece; but Europe takes a glorious revenge when Alexander the Great, traversing Asia Minor and Persia, penetrates as far as the sacred banks of the rivers of India. In the times of the Christian era, from the depths of her deserts Asia pours out the hordes of her nomadic tribes. The Huns are thrown back by the Franks, the Avars by the Germans; but from the other end, through Africa, Asia infiltrates again, and the Moors settle in the Pyrenean peninsula. The crusades are a new challenge of Europe's, and while the nations of the west in useless efforts shed their blood on the soil of Palestine, the eastern plains become the prey of Asiatic incursions. A young

[1] On the Tartar: D'Ohsson, "Histoire des Mongols." 4 vols. Amsterdam, 1834–1835. Von Hammer, "Geschichte der goldenen Horde." Pesth, 1840.

[2] I, 4.

nation whose life had just begun, resists as long as it can, but when from the very centre of Asia, — from the sandy deserts of Mongolia, beyond which the great Celestial Empire lies in its millennial lethargy, — the nomadic empire of Chingis-Khan rises and moves to conquest, young Russia is dismembered and succumbs. Thus Europe is held by Asia on both extremities. Relying upon these two flanks the adverse continent directs the attack towards the centre; through Asia Minor the Ottoman Empire advances against Constantinople. Mahomet II crosses the Bosphorus, effeminate and rotten Byzantium falls, Islam invades the sanctuary of Greek Christianity, and on the cupola of St. Sophia the cross is supplanted by the crescent. But as if the effort of the centre had exhausted the body, the two extremities simultaneously tremble and yield; the Moors are expelled from Spain by Ferdinand the Catholic, and Russia is delivered from the Tartar by John III of Moscow. Once more, according to the fine expression of our great historian Solovieff, "Asiatic quantity was overcome by European quality."

The insignificant town of Moscow is mentioned for the first time in the annals under the date of 1147. Its rapid growth has always been a riddle to people. "Who ever would have thought or surmised," says an old popular song, "that Moscow was to become a kingdom, who ever would have guessed that Moscow would have to count for a state?" It was the apanage of one of the younger princely branches, but the Moscovite princes managed so well that they soon became the eldest among the elder ones. The immediate result of the destruction of Kiev in 1240 was the gradual removal of national life from the desolate southwest to the woody and in those

times less accessible northeast. The grand-ducal throne was transferred to Souzdal, then to Vladimir, and instead of the western Dnieper the eastern Volga becomes the main artery of the country. Thanks to this removal Moscow became the ethnographical centre of the country, — it wanted but the effort of a few intelligent rulers to become the political centre.

At the beginning of the Mongolian yoke the dependence of the princes on the Tartar khans was onerous and humiliating. No one could take possession of the grand-ducal throne unless he was authorized by a khan's charter; they were forced at certain intervals to make their appearance in the Tartars' headquarters beyond the Volga (the so-called "Golden Horde") to pay their respects and taxes; often they were subjected to certain ceremonies of oriental etiquette from which their pride revolted, but they had to put up with everything, for the slightest disobedience was punished by an incursion on their domains. With austere resignation they endured all; and only when Prince Michael of Chernigov was summoned to abjure the Christian faith, compulsion proved powerless and he died the death of a martyr.

But, by and by, revolt on one side and despotism on the other relaxed, and the forced terms between the princes and the khans gradually improved. In the annals of the fourteenth century we already read: prince so-and-so was received by the khan "with honour," returned home "with honour." This "honour," which generally was obtained at the cost of precious gifts to the khan, his wives, and the whole Tartar court, becomes the privilege of the Moscovite princes; care and circumspection, great economy, soon make them the most powerful among the princes; their pecuniary resources

secure them the preponderance at the Tartar court, a wise and conciliating policy renders them somewhat like confidants of the khans — favourites from among enemies; even marriages are concluded with Tartar princesses, who of course embrace the Christian faith. As a result, in 1328 Prince John (called Kalità or "the purse"), though having no genealogical right of precedence, is recognized by the khan as Grand Duke of Russia. He feels so sure of himself that he does not even move to the chief town, Vladimir; the Metropolitan Peter at his invitation settles in Moscow, and hence as the residence of the grand-ducal and the metropolitan thrones, this town becomes the political and ecclesiastical centre of the country.

From this time the authority of the Prince of Moscow grows at the expense of the independence of the other princes. The son of John I, Simeon, is surnamed "the Proud," but this surname pictures far more the feelings of the minor princes than the character of him who was but sober and severe in his justice. "The virtues of the first Grand Dukes of Moscow," says one of our historians,[1] "were less valorous than lucrative." And yet these virtues which were a family feature became the basis of a political system, and while in other princedoms repeated discords mark every change of reign, in Moscow a moral transmission from father to son makes of every successor a sort of testamentary executor of a well-premeditated plan. The plan consisted (1) in a territorial extension at the cost of the other princes, with an enforced spirit of centralization infused into the newly incorporated domains, and (2) an underhand preparation of military forces in view of the great blow to be struck against the

[1] Kluchevsky, "Course of Russian History."

Tartar when the hour should come. And they all worked in the expectation of this hour, no one working for himself, but each for the sake of that unknown successor under whose reign it would please Providence that the hour should come.

And the hour came: in 1380, the name of the Grand Duke of Moscow was Dimitry, the name of the Tartar khan, Mamaÿ; Koulikovo was the name of the field where they met on the 8th of September.

A beam of sunshine seems to pierce the heavy clouds which were overhanging the country. Few moments in history can be compared to the solemnity of the departure of the Grand Duke of Moscow at the head of the first great Russian army, marching against the one great enemy of the country. The old chronicler, the faithful recorder of national distress and national joy, pictures with radiant colours of hopeful anticipation the exodus of this army. St. Serge, the revered prior of the Trinity Convent near Moscow, blesses the soldiers on their way and appoints two monks, Oslab and Peresvet, to accompany the Grand Duke to the battle. Two scenes emerge from the past, when the name of Koulikovo is recalled to our memory. We see, in the misty freshness of a September morning, amidst his soldiers, who have just been ranged for the battle, Prince Dimitry kneeling on the ground and praying under his grand-ducal banner, the black banner with the golden picture of the Saviour; and we see, in the golden sunset of a September evening, Prince Dimitry lying under a tree, recovering from a blow received in the battle and asking who were the winners. Already the trumpets had proclaimed the Russian victory.

With Dimitry the preparatory period of Russia's liberation is finished; his successors inaugurate a policy

of frank hostility against Mamaÿ's successors. A series of intelligent rulers, working always on the ground enriched already by the successful work of their predecessors, consolidate the power of Moscow and relax the bonds of the Mongolian dependence. In 1480 John III effects the complete emancipation. The Tartar Kingdom is dismembered; its scattered members live on for a time; the kingdoms of Kasan and Astrakhan are conquered by John the Terrible eighty years later, the Tartars of the Crimea preserve their independence till as late as the reign of Catherine the Great.

At the accession of John III in 1462 the political pre-eminence of Moscow stands established. This sovereign closes the old period of the Moscovian Grand Duchy and opens the new period of the Moscovian Kingdom. The principle of federative equality in the relations between Moscow and the other princedoms, which had been dying away during the preceding century, is definitively supplanted by the monarchical principle. Let us examine the inner currents by which this change has been brought about. It will at the same time throw a retrospective light on the preceding period and mark the conditions which determine the direction of further historical development.

The extension of the Princedom of Moscow was a fact of incalculable historical importance not because of the centrifugal tendency it imparted to the territorial expansion, but because of the centripetal direction it gave to the consciousness of all social classes, beginning with the princes themselves at whose cost the Moscovian territory grew. At first the incorporation of one apanage after another by the Grand Duke of Moscow had a character of violence, but soon it assumed a more or

less normal character. Many princes of themselves abdicated their rights and passed their domains over to their elder comrade; others, who had no children, made wills in favour of Moscow; later this was erected into a rule, and even when there was no will, the apanage of a childless prince was annexed, and similarly the apanage which remained after the death of a dowager princess; marriages were another means of extension.

With what rapidity the Princedom grew may be seen from the fact that at John III's accession the territory of Moscow was fifteen thousand square miles, while under this prince and his son Basil, *i.e.* in the course of sixty years, it annexed forty thousand square miles of territory. The consequences of this growth of what the chronicles call "the collecting of the Russian land" were of greater importance than we might expect from a simple territorial extension. The first consequence was of a social character. We have just said that the centripetal tendency invaded all classes. The minor princes, deprived of their domains, all come to Moscow and settle round the Kremlin; they become the stock of the higher aristocracy and by a sort of compensation for their fresh wounds they are invested with the pre-eminent official functions. They command the army, they rule the different provinces. But having abdicated their territorial rights, they do not forget their dynastic proximity to the ruling grand duke: it is not easy to keep all these cousins and uncles at respectful distance; relations get more and more strained, and we shall see to what stress they come under the reign of John the Terrible. The next class, the members of the princely droujina, began a long time ago to prefer the rich and powerful Moscovian grand dukes to their

different minor princes; as their service had no compulsory character and they were bound by no obligation, they were perfectly free to pass from one chief to another; by their going over to Moscow they at the same time effected the reinforcement of the grand duke and the weakening of the lesser princes. Lastly the peasants, the agricultural class, who at this time were not yet bound to the territory but free to pass from one landowner to another, naturally preferred to settle round the rich and populous chief town.

Such were the currents of social classes which were set in movement by the rising authority of the grand dukes, and which by that same movement furthered a still greater growth of this authority. By a mutual influence of cause and consequence those same elements which had undergone the attraction towards the centre contributed to its further exaltation.

Dimitry, the vanquisher of Mamaÿ, is the first grand duke who by will disposes of the grand-ducal throne, and leaves it to his eldest son: that which till then had been an abstract principle, sanctioned by the Tartar khan, thus becomes an act of individual decision. From this time the succession of the elder son is always established by the will of the father; sometimes, to prevent misunderstandings, the son is crowned during his father's life and appointed co-regent; the wills of the grand dukes make more and more difference between the eldest and the other sons; and John the Terrible in his will leaves the whole country to his eldest son and only one province to the second, and this one province is no longer an independent domain but an inseparable part of the kingdom: the Tsar's brother

becomes a landowner, but no other ruler is left in the country except the Tsar.

These were the consequences, from the point of view of inner politics of Moscow's growth; it had still another result, if not of deeper, at any rate of wider, importance. Till the middle of the fourteenth century Moscow was a Central Russian princedom, surrounded by Russian neighbours; consequently it never knew what exterior politics meant; all relations outside its own frontier were more or less friendly, but always of a domestic character. Diplomacy did not exist. John III is the first prince who, ascending the throne of the Princedom of Moscow, realizes that he stands on the throne of all the Russias. The inner barriers built up by family discords and personal ambition fall down and are levelled by the great mass of homogeneous population, speaking one language, converging to one centre. And when the first "Lord and Grand Duke of all the Russias," etc., standing on his throne directs his look beyond the frontiers of his country, he sees that the Russian land has foreign neighbours: on the northwest, the Swedes, on the west, the Order of the Teutonic Knights, — Lithuania and Poland; and on the southwest, the Turkish Empire; and all along that western frontier, from the north down to Kiev, he sees ancient Russian provinces, the first ones, Russia's cradle, torn away and incorporated by Poland. This is what John III beheld, and what others before him had had no time to realize, occupied as they were with the Tartar and the "collecting of the Russian land." And as John III was the first who saw his foreign neighbours, he was also the first who made himself seen.

The reappearance of the Russian prince on the

European scene after an absence of over two hundred years is interesting, and takes place under rather picturesque circumstances.

Byzantium had just fallen. The family of the last Emperor, Constantine Palæologus, had fled to Rome and were living under the protection of the Pope. In 1469 an ambassador from Rome comes to Moscow, and in the name of Pope Paul II offers the Grand Duke the hand of Princess Sophia Palæologus, daughter of the last Emperor's brother and the Duchess of Ferrara. The Grand Duke declines to give his consent before sending an embassy of his own to Rome. Meanwhile Pope Paul II dies, and the news reaches Moscow that Calixtus has been elected. In January the embassy leaves Moscow, having at its head an Italian who has been living there for some time past. On their way they learn that it is not Calixtus but Sixtus who has been elected; they scratch out the wrong name from the Grand Duke's letter, substitute the right one, and in May they get to Rome. On the 25th, Sixtus IV receives the Moscovite ambassadors, who hand to him the Grand Duke's letter and sixty sable skins. On the first of June, in St. Peter's Church, Sophia Palæologus is betrothed by proxy to John III. On the 24th of June she leaves Rome and — via Lübeck, the Baltic Sea, Reval, Pskoff — arrives in Moscow on the 12th of November, escorted by the Pope's legate and the ambassadors sent by her two brothers.[1] The pomp, the political importance of this marriage, just suited

[1] One of her brothers later came twice to Moscow and married his daughter to one of the Russian princes. This prince does not seem to have been on good terms either with his brother-in-law or his father-in-law, and by will passed over his rights to the Byzantine throne to Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain.

the ambitions of John III; it made him the immediate successor of the Byzantine emperors; thus it was accepted by his contemporaries, thus he meant it himself, when he adopted the Byzantine double-headed eagle as the coat of arms of Russia. For the first time etiquette is introduced at court, copied chiefly from the Byzantine ceremonial.

Such was the gate through which this sovereign entered history, passing over the threshold of a new period. His contemporaries seem to have realized the new importance which the figure of the monarch had assumed. In his allocution to the Grand Duke, on the day of his crowning, the Metropolitan called him, "Glorious Tsar and *Autocrat*." We hardly can in our days measure the sense the word "autocrat" must have had at that moment, pronounced for the first time, by the head of the Church, and resounding after two hundred years of a humiliating yoke. It was the solemn recognition of the only force which proved to have the power of reconstituting the national unity. It was the historical homage of gratitude to the only principle which proved to be firm amidst the instability of the other elements of national life.

John III, indeed, opened the chief questions which have determined the subsequent historical development of the country. By overthrowing the Tartar yoke he inaugurates the aggressive policy against Asia. Not only will Russia not suffer from new incursions, but she will prevent the very possibility of their reiteration by rendering herself master of those regions whence the invasions had spread.[1] As the end of this policy, which

[1] "It wanted all the western ignorance of Russian affairs," says A. Leroy-Beaulieu, "to speak of 'sending Russians back to their steppes, whence

led to the annexation of Siberia by John the Terrible in 1582,[1] we have ourselves seen the first rails of the great trans-Siberian line laid by the Emperor Nicholas II, at the time heir to the throne, when he landed on the Pacific coast in May, 1891.[2] The question on the western frontier of the reincorporation of the old Russian provinces was handed over by John III to his posterity as one of the most burning questions of national history. Its definite solution, postponed from time to time by a continuous widening of interests, led to the Swedish wars of Peter the Great; the conquest of the Baltic shores, the foundation of St. Petersburg, and the formation of the Russian fleet.

Under John III the first relations with Western Europe begin. An embassy is exchanged with the German Emperor Frederick IV, who asks for the hand of one of John's daughters for his son Maximilian;[3] it, however, had no result.

Of greater consequence were the embassies exchanged with Italy, especially with Venice.[4] The Rus-

they ought never to have moved.' Far from coming from the steppes, the Russians entered them at a comparatively recent epoch." ("L'Empire des Tsars." Paris, 1883-1889. T. i, l. i, chap. iii. English translation, Putnam & Co., New York.)

[1] On Russia's colonizing movement: A. Brueckner, "Europäisirung Russland's." Gotha, 1888, chap. iv.

[2] Prince Ookhtomsky, "Journey of the Tsarevich." 2 vols. Edinburgh. Constable, 1895. On "Siberia and the Great Siberian Railway." Vol. v of "The Industries of Russia. Composed by order of the Ministry of Finance for the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago." 5 vols. St. Petersburg, 1893.

[3] What would have become of European history had Maximilian I married a Russian princess and not Mary of Burgundy?

[4] On Russian early embassies abroad: A. Brueckner, "Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte."

sian Grand Duke, wishing to adorn his capital with stone buildings, sent to Venice for an architect. Fioravanti, called Aristoteles, was delegated by Doge Marcello, and from this time dates that queer architecture which is like the petrification of the old Russian wooden style. The chief cathedrals, the beautiful white wall, and all the splendour of the "golden-headed" Kremlin date from this reign.[1]

An interesting episode of Moscow's relations with Italy is the participation of the Metropolitan Isidor at the ecclesiastical council, convoked by Pope Eugene IV in 1438 at Florence, while the grand-ducal throne in Moscow was occupied by John III's father, Basil the Gloomy. The Byzantine Emperor, John Palæologus,[2] had hoped a reconciliation of the Greek and Roman churches would help to strengthen him against the advancing march of the Ottoman forces; he went to Italy and became the zealous promoter of the council. The sessions began in the autumn, first at St. George's Church in Ferrara; in January they were transferred to the church of Santa Maria Novella at Florence. On the 6th of July the close of the council was celebrated with a pontifical mass. Yet it had no practical result: the eastern churches did not adopt the decision of their representatives, who accepted the recognition of the Pope's supremacy. The Metropolitan Isidor, returning to Moscow, was declared apostate and had to flee; he

[1] On Russian architecture: Viollet-le-Duc, "L'art Russe." Paris, 1877. On the Kremlin: Weltmann, "Souvenirs historiques du Kremlin de Moscow." Moscow, 1843. Fabricius, "Le Kremlin de Moscow." Moscow, 1883. On Russian antiquities: "Antiquités de l'Empire de Russie." 6 vols. in folio. Moscow, 1849–1853. Solutsev, "Antiquities of the Russian State." 6 vols. plates and 6 vols. text (Russian). Moscow, 1849.

[2] He was married to Basil's daughter, Anna.

died in Rome, a cardinal. In the Laurentian Library of the St. Lawrence Church at Florence you may see an ornamented document, hanging in a frame which is chained to the wall — it is the act of the Florentine council: among the Latin and Greek signatures which follow those of the Pope and the Emperor you may see in red Slavonic characters the signature of the "humble minister of God, Isidor, Metropolitan of Russia."[1]

Under John III's son, Basil, the Austrian baron, Herberstein, twice came to Moscow, once in 1516, sent by the Emperor Maximilian I; the next time, on Charles V's part in 1526. More valuable for us than the orders he brought with him are the impressions he received and took home. His "Rerum Moscovitarum Commentarii" are one of the most precious documents in the bibliography of foreign writings concerning ancient Russia.[2]

Under the reign of Basil's son, John IV the Terrible, the first commercial relations with England were established. The English merchants envying the Spanish and Portuguese for the successes of their commerce brought about by their geographical discoveries, decided to find some new resources for themselves. A society was founded "for the discovery of unknown lands," and in May, 1553, several vessels left the Thames provided with a letter of Edward VI, "to the sovereigns of eastern

[1] On later relations of Moscow with the Vatican: Le P. Pierling, S. J., "Rome at Moscow (1547–1579)." Paris, 1883. "Grégoire XIII et Ivan le Terrible." ("Revue des questions historiques." Avril, 1883.)

[2] The first Latin edition in Vienna, 1549. Translated into several languages. The English translation, published by the Hakluyt Society in 1851–1852: "Notes upon Russia." 2 vols.

and northern countries." The next year Captain Chancellor, commander of one of these ships, enters the mouth of the Northern Dwina; he gets ashore and goes to Moscow. He is kindly received by the Tsar and dismissed with a letter for King Edward. In 1555, the same Chancellor reappears in Moscow as an official envoy of King Philip and Queen Mary. At the end of the negotiations the English merchants are given the privilege of free trade in all parts of the country. When in 1557 the ambassador of John IV came to London, Russian merchants were granted the same privilege in England.[1]

Thus it is by way of the Arctic Ocean that Russia feels the first contact of the world's commercial movement. She might have felt it from another side, — from her territorial frontier, and she even hoped to do so: several times artisans and artists had been asked for and

[1] All documents concerning these negotiations in: "The First Forty Years of Intercourse between England and Russia." Documents collected, copied, and edited by George Tolstoi, St. Petersburg, 1875; also in vol. xxviii, of the Russian Imperial Historical Society.

An interesting contemporary book: Giles Fletcher, "Of the Russe Common Wealth or Manner of Governement by the Russe Emperor commonly called the Emperour of Moscovia with the manners and fashions of the people of the country. At London. Printed by T. D. for Thomas Chare, 1591." (A bibliographical rarity, reprinted in Ed. A. Bond's "Russia at the Close of the Sixteenth Century." London, 1856.).

G. Fletcher (1565–1610), student of Eton and Cambridge, was sent to Moscow in 1588; he spent two years in Russia, and returning to London published his book in 1591. His work contains many valuable details though very insufficient in its appreciations and deductions. The carelessness with which he treated his subject appears clearly enough from his statement that Russia has neither written history nor written law, whereas at that time Russia possessed the "Annals," the "Russian Law," the "Code of John III" (1497) and the "Code of John IV" (1550). Too much credit is paid to accounts of Fletcher, Horsay, and other "contemporaries" by W. R. Morfill, in his "Story of Russia" (in the series "The Story of Nations," New York, 1891), for the rest a very conscientious and valuable work.

sent, but our nearest neighbours never allowed them to pass the Russian frontier. In 1547 Charles V, who then was at the Diet of Augsburg, gave to the Tsar's envoy a permit conferring upon him the right of recruiting, in the confines of the Empire, learned and skilled men to be taken over to Russia. A hundred and twenty-three artisans were ready to sail from Lübeck, but they were arrested in consequence of Livonian intrigue; one of them attempting to escape to Moscow was executed by the German Knights of the Teutonic Order. The magistrates of Riga even extorted from Charles V a written promise that no more artisans should be sent to Russia. No, the western frontier was no junction; it was carefully watched and made into a barrier. Listen to what King Sigismund Augustus of Poland writes to Queen Elizabeth of England: —

"As we have written afore, so now we write againe to your Ma^ty that we know and feele of a surety the Moscovite dayly to grow mightier by the increse of such things as be brought to the Narue,[1] while not onely wares but also weapons heretofore vnknowen to him, and artificers and arts be brought vnto him: by meane whereof he maketh himselfe strong to vanquish all others. Which things, as long as this voyage to Narue is vsed, can not be stopped. And we perfectly know your Ma^ty can not be ignorant of what force he is. We seemed hitherto to vanquish him onely in this, that he was rude of arts, and ignorant of policies. If so be that this navigation to the Narue continue, what shall be vnknowen to him?"[2]

[1] Now Narva, a town connected with the Baltic by the river Narova.

[2] G. Tolstoi, op. cit. The original contains a few remarks on John's personal character; we leave them out as having no importance in this case: in a political *system* psychological considerations are a pretext, not an argument.

The precautions of the King of Poland were useless; the difficulties and risks of those frozen regions which Chancellor had to traverse did not prevent Russia from being "discovered" independently of Narva. The unifying spirit which works in the world had overcome the greatest obstacles of Nature: what were the partial efforts of national division?[1]

The intercourse with foreigners has made us deviate for a while from our main subject — the inner growth of the political elements; let us take up the interrupted thread. As you saw, the sovereign of Moscow grew, surrounded by the newly rising class of the titled nobility, descendants of the deposed minor princes. The authority of the Grand Duke grew, as a result of the dynastic decay of the aristocracy; the importance of the aristocracy grew in consequence of its proximity to the rising throne. Thanks to such a simultaneous growth of these two elements, towards the beginning of the fifteenth century Moscow presents an absolute monarchy with an aristocratic government; the "Douma," composed of the chief representatives of the aristocracy, becomes somewhat like a plural counsellor. But in spite of this well-established political form the two elements did not assimilate; the inner harmony was troubled by passions and was too much dependent upon individual character. This fully appeared when the absolute power passed into the hands of such a character as John the Terrible.

In 1547 the grandson of John III crowns himself first Tsar of Russia. The title, a Russified abbrevia-

[1] On foreign travellers in Russia: Adelung, "Kritisch-literarische Uebersicht der Reisenden in Russland bis 1700, deren Berichte bekannt sind." St. Petersburg, 1864.

tion of the Latin "Cæsar," appears before; John III and Basil were often called "Tsar," yet never in official acts. The beginnings of John IV prognosticate a brilliant reign. Intelligent and well-intentioned counsellors surround the young sovereign; a beautiful woman of high moral qualities is chosen by the Tsar to be his wife; Anastasia Romanov becomes his guardian angel, quickens the good aspirations of his character, and dulls the instincts of him who will be called "the Terrible," or more correctly, "the thunder-stormy." Kazan and Astrakhan, the two Tartar kingdoms which still survive on the Volga, are overthrown and annexed; a work of legislation is begun; the war with Sweden, Livonia, and Poland begins the interminable struggle which is destined to clear the way from Moscow to Europe. But the brilliant period does not last. Anastasia Romanov dies, and with her death the handle of John's moral tiller breaks.

One day during a very bad illness he was lying in bed, and by chance overheard a violent dispute in the next room: the boÿars were discussing the succession to the throne, and from his bed the Tsar could hear that they nearly all were refusing to execute his Will — to take the oath in favour of his son. They did not care to have Anastasia's family secure political preponderance at their cost: the Romanovs were a younger family than they were and did not descend from Rurik, — so strong as yet was the feeling of their dynastic relationship to the ruling house.[1] The dying

[1] And yet, such were the trials of the following period which ended with the "times of confusion," so entirely was that dynastic pride suppressed by the levelling force of a common national danger, that sixty years later a youth of this same family was elected to the throne just because he was not one of themselves.

Tsar listened to the criticism of his Will; and all the intrigue which had surrounded his fatherless childhood at once came back to his memory. He is filled with disgust, mistrust glides into his heart and awakens suspicion in his mind. He does not die; he recovers, but he arises from the couch another man.

One day the population of Moscow learned with amazement that the Tsar had unexpectedly left the town with his whole court and made off for one of his suburban residences. A month later two briefs came to Moscow: in the one the Tsar declared himself the friend and protector of the people; in the other he covered with reproach the nobility and the clergy; finally he declared that he would nevermore return to his capital. Never before had history seen a sovereign who was pouting at his country, and this is what it was, and so it remained until the end. Unfortunately this pouting was not inactive; he virtually put himself out of his own country. The kingdom was divided into two parts: the whole land on one side, and the sovereign and his immediate surrounding on the other. This immediate surrounding, forming the Tsar's personal guard of about a thousand men, became the terror of the country. They were called "oprichniky," from the word "oprich," "outside," meaning that they were put "outside" the law and had to fear nothing in accomplishing their duty of hunting down the Tsar's enemies. Their ensign — a dog's head and a broom hanging on each side of their saddle — was the emblems of the qualities required for "sweeping away treason." A terrible epoch began, — terrible for everybody, — although the Tsar had declared himself the friend of the people. By hundreds, by thousands, were counted the victims whose names were

inscribed by order of the Tsar in the diptychs of different convents in order that prayers should be offered for the salvation of their souls.

All that slumbered in that dark and enigmatic character by and by came to the surface; his instincts suddenly overcame his talents, and the latter reappear thereafter only when he sees that anybody holds them in doubt: then suddenly he rises in all the brightness of his versatility. In his correspondence with Prince Kourbsky, one of his worst enemies, who had fled to the Polish king, he shows himself one of the most learned men of his time; his letters swarm with quotations from Scripture, from Greek and Latin authors; in his diplomatic intercourse he is a proud and self-conscious head of that same country which at home he treats as an enemy; in his writings of a semi-lyrical, semi-religious character he is humble, subdued, crushed under the weight of his crimes, annihilated by repentance. But let a foreign sovereign refuse him one of his titles, his susceptibility is on fire; in his care for his dynastic dignity he is sometimes almost childish. "We are descended from Cæsar Augustus; it is known to everybody," he says to the envoy of the King of Poland.[1] But to whatever passion he may give way, it is always with theatrical effect. He likes the pomp of executions, the picturesqueness of tortures, the magnificence of massacres: he loves the sumptuousness of religious ceremonies, but he prefers the rigidity of the humble cell where he retires from the wickedness of

[1] This genealogy by and by received official sanction: in the charter on the election of Michael Romanov (1613) Rurik is represented as direct descendant of Augustus, Emperor of the Romans. ("Collection of State Charters and Treaties," No. 203, vol. i. St. Petersburg, 1813.)

the world, where he contemplates the ulcers of his soul; he delights to confess his sins, he is touched by the sight of his own repentance.[1] Strange to say, this mighty despot was a feeble character; he could not stand out against contradiction; he was clever, bright, eloquent only on paper or when he knew that he would not be interrupted; but he could not discuss: the moment he was contradicted he became furious and nothing else. Under such conditions this theatric disposition became a means of isolating himself, of cutting short all attempts at contradiction; any man can be tempted to enter into a discussion, but who ever will dare to interrupt the course of a theatrical performance! Thus he built up something like a fortress behind which he felt unassailable and safe. Such was the man who till 1584 occupied the throne of Moscow.

The character of John the Terrible is a point on which the greatest divergency of opinion is shown by our historians. Some make of him the central figure of the whole ante-petrine epoch. Overlooking the defects of his character and the dark sides of his reign, they put in evidence his talents, which came to the front under propitious circumstances, when suspicion was dulled and cruelty not provoked; they make him the pivot of the Moscovite period,—a sort of Peter the Great to whom history refused opportunities. Others see nothing except a crazy despot who, for a while at the beginning of his reign, had experienced the beneficent influence of a few good counsellors and an intelligent and loving wife, but afterwards showed nothing but cruelty, animalism, and hypocrisy. These

[1] C. Aksakov, one of the leaders of the Slavophile party, was the first to put into light this side of John's character.

make him a sort of Russian Nero; worse than the Roman — for he was a Christian, at least lived in Christian times and professed Christianity. A man who can be estimated so differently would furnish an interesting subject for psychological studies even if he had been a private individual; but in this case the qualities which determine such contradictory judgments happen to be those of a sovereign,— a sovereign whose ancestors present a gradual rising of monarchical self-consciousness, whose grandfather had been called "autocrat" by the head of the Church, and who himself, considering himself the culminating point of this historical ascension, takes the title of Tsar of Russia. His was one of those richly endowed personalities which contain the germs of every kind of development; Nature seems to have equally equipped them for vice or virtue and to have insisted upon no preferences: the realization of their character is made an act of their individual choice, whether they give the pre-eminence to talents or to instincts.[1] In this case psychology may plead extenuating circumstances,— history takes count of facts and registers the implacable verdict of the national memory. It is to be deplored that the normal growth of the political body which was only just ready to be settled and consolidated was suddenly interrupted by the intervention of a man abnormal in every way, a sovereign of great political wisdom, yet only in theory. By reducing interests of internal policy to questions of personal security, he sus-

[1] "... and the greater the soul of a man, the more it is capable of undergoing the influence of good, — the deeper does it fall in the abyss of crime, the more does it harden in evil. Such was John." (Belinsky, Works, vol. ii. In Russian.)

pended the historical development of his country; by killing his eldest son in a fit of rage, he occasioned the extinction of the dynasty; by leaving the throne to his second son, the feeble-minded and childless Theodor,[1] he opened the way for the trials by which the country had to expiate his crimes. Few epochs in history offer an accumulation of such disasters as those which befell Russia after his reign: three impostors assuming the name of Dimitry, an infant son of John the Terrible, who had perished under the knife of a murderer;[2] the invasion of the Polish army, the occupation of Moscow; gangs of robbers, and an ever-increasing anarchy fill those terrible years known as "times of confusion."[3] Fifteen years of chaotic fermentation separate the death of the last royal descendant of Rurik in 1598, from the election of the first Romanov in 1613. The

[1] A touching character, this last offspring of the dynasty; but times were too hard, and historical circumstances required another sovereign than he who, according to the chronicles, had "all his life avoided vanities of the world and thought of nothing but heavenly things." The description of Theodor's coronation by J. Horsey: Appendix No. 1 to Bond's "Russia at the Close of the Sixteenth Century." A tragedy by Count Alexis Tolstoi: "Feodor Ivanovich." German translation by Mr. C. Pavloff. Dresden, 1869.

[2] On these times: Prosper Mérimée, "Les faux Démétrius." Paris, 1853. Le P. Pierling, S. J., "Rome et Démétrius." Paris, 1878. The first False Dimitry has often been treated by dramatists (with more or less historical truth): Poushkin, "Boris Godounoff." French translation by Tourgenieff and Viardot. English translation and abridgment, by Nathan Haskell Dole, *Poet Lore*, 1890. Soumarokof, "Dimitry the Impostor." English translation. London, 1806. Schiller, "Demetrius." General Alexander, "Dramatic Sketch from Russian History." London, 1876.

[3] An interesting contemporary work by a Dutch traveller: "Histoire des guerres de la Moscovie (1601–1610) par Isaac Massa de Haarlem, publiée pour la première fois d'après le Ms. hollandais original de 1610 avec d'autres opuscules sur la Russie et des annotations par le Pr. Michel Obolensky et M. le Dr. A. Van der Linde." 2 vols. Brussels, 1866.

"Thunder-stormy" Tsar disappeared, but he left a profound furrow; it took the country a long time to recover from the persecutions of his reign.

And yet so strong is the prestige of character that John the Terrible had his admirers. While science discusses his greater or less value from the point of view of historic morality, art, greedy of pure picturesqueness, takes possession of this fantastic despot whose palace presents an intermingling of orgies in the glittering frame of Byzantine luxury, with litanies and processions moving in the religious twilight of monastic rigidity. His ungainly figure in the monk's floating cassock, his aquiline nose, his small and piercing eyes, the velvet skull-cap, the bony fist clenching the famous iron staff which broke the skull of his son, the big cross on his breast, and the open Bible on his knees, have been perpetuated and handed over to future generations by painting, sculpture, poetry, drama.[1] Thus he who, during his life, had been hated and feared, through the removing distance of centuries and the refracting prism of art becomes an object of admiration. There is a sort of compensation in the fact that he who had so often made a stage play of his own life, should become such a fruitful artistic subject after his death. As light transpierces the dull piece of coal and transfigures it into a diamond, so art, getting hold sometimes of the saddest facts of life, penetrates into them and raises them, ac-

[1] "The death of John the Terrible," tragedy in five acts, by Count Alexis Tolstoi. German translation by Mr. C. Pavloff. Dresden, 1868. English translation by T. H. Harrison. London, 1869. A fine character of John the Terrible in a novel by the same: "Prince Serebriany." English translation by Captain Filmore; also by Jeremiah Curtin (Boston, 1892). Italian translation by Patuzzi in "Perseveranza." 1872. On Count Alexis Tolstoi: A. De Gubernatis, "Il Conte Allessio Tolstoi." Firenze, 1874.

cording to Gogol's expression, into "a jewel of creation."

Strange is the aspect historical events assume when looked at under the optic angle of art; they seem to lose the vital value of plants rooted in the soil; art removes them out of life, makes them somewhat innoxious; the most terrible acts flatter our senses and do not hurt our feelings; by a sort of distillation their venomousness is evaporated, and instead of alarming us by revolting our sense of morality, as they do in life, they rejoice us by exciting our æsthetic enthusiasm. Here lies the danger of an artistic temperament for an historical writer. Picturesqueness and morality do not always go hand in hand, and an historian with an excessive æsthetic sensibility must feel inclined to extenuate the moral reprehensiveness of a picturesque character or fact.

We touch here the interesting and as yet scarcely elucidated point of the moral value of æsthetical emotions. What art does with historical events it does with facts of daily life; it picks out human passions and human sufferings, it transplants them from life into a world of fiction. We go to the theatre, and we sympathize with what we see, and we suffer and weep, and we are thoroughly persuaded that we are looking at real human pain and weep real human tears, whereas we are looking at the representation of human pain and weep not vital but æsthetical tears. Does the difference not appear clearly enough? The sight of *real* human pain hurts or disgusts; the *representation* of human pain procures delight: real vital tears burn; æsthetical tears — in the theatre for instance — are a test of good acting, the proof of our enjoyment, for had we no enjoyment of it we should never go to the theatre. Evidently those human

sufferings which unroll themselves on the stage are transfigured sufferings, and the process of transfiguration consists in rendering them harmless, incapable of wounding. Imagine we might approach, as it were a gigantic aquarium, the under-water world on the bottom of the ocean, and through the transparency of the crystal wall contemplate without any danger for ourselves the monsters moving behind it. Just so we contemplate the picture of human sufferings in the theatre; their sting is blunted, their venomousness is neutralized, they touch our excitability, but they spare our vulnerability. Accordingly, if the instrument of art is deprived of poison and edge, the feelings it produces must be deprived of painfulness; and, indeed, instead of hurting, as they would under similar circumstances in life, they fascinate, they are delightful, and we indulge in them.

It is easy to conceive how wrong it would be to adopt that artistic way of looking at human sufferings, and to practise it outside the domain of art; what great faults a historian might commit by applying the æsthetical standard to historical events: the integrity of his judgment can be corrupted at its root by æsthetical considerations.

I fear we have lost sight of our subject, but we will not apologize: a critic said that digressions were old-fashioned, but that still more old-fashioned were apologies for digressions; so we shall not apologize. Let us throw a rapid glance on the intellectual culture of this long period from the Tartar invasion in 1224 to the "times of confusion" which preceded the election of the first Romanov in 1613.

The unfortunate country which at the beginning of

its history had been thrown against Asia, seemed to concentrate all its forces into this struggle, and when the hour of liberation came, the intellectual culture stood on the same point, and perhaps lower, than at the hour of subjugation. The monasteries continued their work of copying and translating, but it was always in the narrow circle of Christian Byzantinism. There were learned men among the clergy and at the court, yet their learning had a hopeless character of sterility; it was reduced to the knowledge of a certain number of books, intellectual culture consisted not in a widening of the brain but in its being stuffed with quotations. Such appears to us the learning of John the Terrible, and he was one of the most learned of his time. The word "science" was not even known in those days; the narrow and limited "skill" or "craft" was used in its place. Attempts at bringing over trained artificers from Western Europe had been made — we have seen their sad results. At the end of the sixteenth century several Russian youths were sent abroad for the purpose of studying — they never returned.

In 1563 John the Terrible founded the first Russian printing-press, assisted by the advice of the Metropolitan Makarius and the learned Greek Maximus, a friend of Aldus Manucius of Venice.[1] An eminent man of that time was the above-mentioned Prince Kourbsky, the correspondent of John the Terrible. Besides his letters, where he shows far more real and well-assimilated learning than his most august correspondent, he left a "Story of the Grand Duke of Moscow, and the deeds which we have learned from reliable men, or

[1] "The Acts of the Apostles" was the first book printed in Russia (1564).

which we saw with our own eyes": it is the first attempt at a genuine Russian history.[1] Another contemporary of John IV, the priest Sylvester, has left an interesting document, a code of domestic morality, called "the House-builder" — humble in its didactic theorizings, despotic in its practical prescriptions. The Metropolitan Makarius composed his great work, "The Lives of the Saints," a book of a peculiar poetical charm, which even to-day remains a favourite of the people. An epic song was inspired by the battle of Koulikovo ("Zadonschina"), the first victory gained over the Tartar, but in spite of an evident imitation of "The Word about Igor's Fights" it is of little literary value.

So scarce are the products of the intellectual culture of that time; but we must keep in mind that the period we speak of begins with the Tartar subjugation. Many historians say: "Russia did not lose much by the Tartar yoke; if there had been any culture before, it would have survived; if we do not see any at the end of the period, it is the best proof that there had been none before; after all, Russia was not turned back from civilization, she only stopped, she remained at the same point." They do not realize how deeply they sin against history in saying so. There are, there can be, no standstills in history: by the fact that a nation does not advance, she retrogrades; for the rest of the world goes on and does not wait for her. Only think with what gigantic paces human genius was advancing on its way, and you will realize how far behind our poor country was left.

[1] It begins with John the Terrible's childhood, and goes as far as 1578. Its main idea is that the terrible Tsar was good as long as he was well surrounded.

We have reached the year 1613 in our narration. What was this time in the rest of the world? What were the names that shone on the other side of the frontier? In England, Shakespeare and Bacon; in France, Rabelais and Montaigne; Descartes was already born; in Spain, Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Calderon de la Barca; in Italy, Galileo and that innumerable Pleiad of Italian painters, writers, sculptors, and scientists of every kind, each of whom makes the glory of their own country and the pride of the whole world. It was the time when ever young antiquity, in the immaculate beauty of her Grecian serenity, had lately arisen from the Italian soil, and, with a new unknown expression in her eyes, crowned with mystic flowers of Christian poetry, had dispersed the gloom of the Middle Ages and lit the sun of the "Renaissance." It was the time when the intrepid prows of European vessels, cleaving the waves of distant oceans, plunged into new horizons and landed at the shores of virgin continents. Russia remained in the background during all that movement. Everybody is not called at the same time to co-operate in the great work of universal advancement. But if everybody has not helped to dig the well, to everybody is given the right of drinking the water. Russia had to conquer even that right. We are now about to examine the conditions which made of that conquest the most arduous of all her conquests.

LECTURE IV

(1613-1725)

The first Romanovs. Characteristic of the period. The Patriarch Nikon and the "revision of the texts." Awakening of critical spirit. Foreign infiltration and inner reaction. The Court. The precursors.

Peter the Great. His historical figure. Peter's campaigns. The reform, its methods, its spirit. Posterity and contemporaries. Tsarevich Alexis. Peter's death. Division of national opinion. Intestine polemics on foreign soil.

LECTURE IV

(1613–1725)

As to Peter, — know ye all, that life to him is of no value so long as Russia lives in glory and prosperity. — FROM THE ORDER OF THE DAY GIVEN TO THE ARMY BEFORE THE BATTLE OF POLTAVA.

THERE are in history individualities whose names shine with such splendour that they not only throw their light on subsequent periods, but seem to lighten the previous epochs; events immediately preceding their appearance lose that independent value which all historical events have when considered as results of the past, and acquire in the eyes of posterity the secondary value of auxiliary facts, as if history were endowed with prescience: events seem not so much to undergo the impulsion of the past as to obey the attraction of the future. One of these individualities is Peter the Great. We will therefore consider the times of the first sovereigns of the newly elected dynasty inasmuch as they constitute a *preparatory* epoch.

On the 21st of February, 1613, the interregnum is put an end to by the election of Michael Romanov.[1] The country got out of the "times of confusion," but the effort it required to deliver itself from the invasion of foreigners and from the gangs of robbers had exhausted

[1] On this event: Ervin Bauer, "Die Wahl Michael Feodorovich Romanov's zum Tsaren von Russland," in "Historische Zeitschrift." Neue Folge, Band XX.

all its forces; towns were destroyed, villages burnt, fields devastated; in many places houses were encumbered with corpses. The people worn out, exasperated, were driven to the pitch of desperation. The reigns of Michael and his son Alexis were troubled with continuous riots, and it required a good deal of wisdom and care on the part of the two first rulers of the new dynasty to heal the nation's wounds under such conditions. Exterior affairs no more than interior allowed the country to take rest. The former Princedom of Moscow now extended to the east as far as the Chinese frontier, while on the west the three capital questions of its political life — the conquest of the Baltic shores, the incorporation of the old Russian Provinces annexed by Poland (the so-called Little Russian question), and the expulsion of the Tartar from the Crimea — involved her in a series of campaigns against Sweden, Poland, and Turkey.[1] In putting together the duration of these campaigns led by Michael and Alexis, we have in the seventy years of their reigns thirty years of war. And with all that, so conscientious was the work of these first Romanovs, so sincere their efforts to appease the country, and so charming their personal character, that the reigns of Michael, Alexis,

[1] In these times we must look for the beginning of the "Eastern Question." The first who formulated the opinion according to which Russia's historical mission was to deliver the southwestern Slavonians from the Turkish dominion, was a certain Krijanich, a Servian who had settled in Moscow under Tsar Alexis. (See: Louis Léger, "Nouvelles Études Slaves." 1ère série. Paris, 1880. On the Eastern Question: A. Leroy-Beaulieu, "Politique russe et panslavisme," in "Revue des Deux Mondes," 13th December, 1876.) The last important event in connection with the Eastern Question is the Turkish-Russian War of 1877–1878, for the emancipation of Bulgaria. (F. V. Greene, "Russian Army and its Campaigns in Turkey in 1877–1878." New York, 1879.)

and his eldest son Theodor leave in history the impression of what they wished them to be, — an impression of peace, of rest, of benevolence. Foreign contemporaries of Alexis could not conceive how a sovereign invested with absolute power could never have attacked any man's life or property or honour. Though somewhat too optimistic, this statement of the German ambassador[1] renders well the historical colouring of that period of calm contained between the turbulent vicissitudes of the interregnum, and the fermentation brought about by the violence of Peter's reform.

In such an atmosphere arose those intellectual currents which were the precursors of the great reformatory wave; from this time dates the awakening of the critical spirit which made it possible for the innovations to take root in people's minds. Let us examine the soil on which this spirit of criticism broke out, and the points at which it was directed.

As we have already seen, the clergy and the monasteries were the depositories of that narrow Byzantine culture which, still narrowed by difficulties of translating, was the only intellectual food of the whole precedent period. It is from the same ecclesiastical soil the critical movement started; though it assumed much greater proportions than its initiators intended to give it, though the promoters themselves were afraid of the infinity of the widening direction the critical spirit seemed to inaugurate, it is nevertheless in the Church and the passionate ecclesiastical debates of this time, that we must look for the first germs of the intellectual and social reform. The

[1] Mayerberg, "Iter in Moscoviam." French translation, "Relation d'un voyage en Moscovie," Leyden, 1688, also in the "Bibliographie Russe et Polonaise." I and II.

authoritative and ambitious figure of Patriarch Nikon becomes the central point of this movement, and the revision of the ecclesiastical books, the question which starts the fermentation.

One day in the Cathedral of the Assumption, — the largest and finest among the numerous churches of the Kremlin, the one where, since John IV, all tsars and later all emperors of Russia were crowned, — Tsar Alexis, surrounded by his court and an innumerable crowd of people, threw himself at the feet of the Metropolitan Nikon, imploring him not to refuse the acceptance of the patriarchal throne to which he had been elected by the council.[1] This was in 1642. Six years later, in the Cathedral of the Assumption, the Patriarch Nikon, after having celebrated mass, at which mass the Tsar did not assist, unburdening himself of the ensigns of his rank, declared to the assisting people that he was no longer their patriarch, and amidst the tears and lamentations of the crowd walked out of the cathedral and left for a suburban convent. What had occurred in that six years' interval? The civil and the ecclesiastic powers had come to a conflict; the Tsar grew tired of the increasing pretensions of the patriarch who, availing himself of many years of friendship and intellectual communion, by and by assumed the rank of a second tsar, and called himself "Lord Great Sovereign." We will not follow the events of this dramatic episode of our ecclesiastical history; Nikon, summoned

[1] The metropolitan of Moscow was enthroned patriarch by Jeremiah, patriarch of Constantinople under Theodor, John the Terrible's son, in 1589. (See Adelung, "Der griechische Patriarch Jeremias in Moskwa, 1589." St. Petersburg, 1840.) The patriarchate of Russia was suppressed and the synod substituted, by Peter the Great, in 1721.

before an ecclesiastical council composed of representatives of the Russian clergy, presided over by the patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch,[1] was declared wrong in his behaviour, and forced to resign for good; he spent the rest of his days in a distant convent.[2] The fact interesting to us is that among those measures taken by him, which, in spite of his condemnation, were accepted and approved of by the council, was the revision he had made of the ecclesiastical books.

Thanks to the continuous process of copying, mistakes and incorrectnesses could not help stealing into the texts. So long as they were only manuscripts, the responsibility could always be charged to the copyist, but when they began to be printed by the ecclesiastical press, the errors acquired a sort of consecration. For a long time past learned monks from Greece and from Kiev, where traditions were observed, had been pointing out the errors to the Moscovite clergy. Nikon was one of the first to take real notice of the fact, and put hand to a thorough revision of the books according to the Greek texts. The necessity was urgent, yet in some way it was already too late. A great part of the people would not accept the rectifications; rejecting the Nikon texts, they clung to the ancient ones and produced that which is known as the "Great Schism" of the Russian Church.

We must keep in mind the almost dogmatic significance given to the letter in those times to understand the meaning of Nikon's reform and of its official acknow-

[1] The patriarchs of Constantinople and Jerusalem had been asked by the Tsar, but were detained by their diocesan affairs.

[2] On Nikon: W. Palmer, "The Patriarch and the Tsar." 6 vols. 1871–1876. Interesting details of every-day life: A. Brueckner, "Des Patriarchen Nikon Ausgabebuch" in "Baltische Monatsschrift," iv, 3, 4.

ledgment: it was the admission of criticism in the domain of those questions which till then were regarded as inaccessible to reason. And in fact reason awakens, and the critical spirit breaks out. Several schools are founded in different convents where Greek Byzantinism enters into competition with Latin scholasticism. A plan of an academy is approved by Alexis' son, Theodor, and carried out (1633) under the regency of his sister Sophia, who ruled during the minority of Peter the Great.

The necessity of learning imposes itself with more and more urgency on the minds of men. That self-belief which characterizes all nations who have lived for a long time without intercourse with others is shaken, and self-criticism raises its voice. When the Church herself gives the example of self-revision, how can other sides of life remain in a continuous "status quo"? "What is impossible in Russia!" exclaims a contemporary; "anything can be obtained in a monarchy. Is the merchant illiterate? Close his shop and keep it so until he learns reading and writing." The increasing foreign infiltration becomes an important factor in this movement. The famous "German Suburb" in Moscow, which soon is going to become the favourite resort of Tsar Alexis' son, the young Prince Peter, rapidly grows and becomes a sort of living cyclopædia of foreign "craft" and "skill" which dazzles and enchants.[1] Foreign people, foreign habits, foreign books, become points of comparison, and, for many, examples for imitation. Slight facts open new horizons of foreign superiority and dis-

[1] On the German Suburb and in general on foreigners in Russia: A. Brueckner, "Die Europäisirung Russland's." Gotha, 1888, and "Culturhistorische Studien," ii, Riga, 1878.

close the abysses of our ignorance. A dignitary of the Church, who carries on a Latin correspondence with a foreign merchant staying at Archangel, writes to thank him for some Latin books:[1] he considers them "Opera preciosissima . . in quibus quot paginas revolvo, tot fructus colligo"; and then in a touching access of very excusable envy he adds: "Laudabiles sunt hae regiones, quae tales libros vel potius talium librorum auctores doctissimos et eruditissimos producunt."[2] But all the clergy were not like him, and a violent reaction breaks out in the sermons of the time against the dangers of a blind imitation. Nikon himself, at the beginning of this movement, felt alarmed at the rapidity with which innovations invaded domestic life. With Savonarolian fanaticism he burns pictures, destroys an organ, cuts to pieces the liveries one of the boÿars has made for his servants. If such were Nikon's feelings, you may imagine what were the opinions of those who clung to the ancient texts because they considered Nikon too advanced. In a collection of spiritual precepts of the time, we read the following terrifying sentences: "Abominable before God is he who likes geometry . prefer simplicity to wisdom; that which is higher than you never seek to explore, that which is deeper than you never seek to fathom, but that learning which comes from God and is given to you ready made, that keep for yourself."

[1] Dimitry, metropolitan of Rostoff (d. 1709) to Isaac Van der Burg. He was one of the most learned men among the Russians of the time, and author of many valuable works. In his library, it is said, for the first time the works of Bacon appeared in Russia.

[2] "Most precious works . . . in which on every page I turn I find some new fruit. . . . Laudable those countries which produce such books or rather the most able and most learned authors of such books."

You see the violence of opinions on either side.[1] The struggle began; Russia's future depended upon the issue of the conflict. Which would be the stronger of the two; which ideas would attain pre-eminence; which would triumph, enlightenment or obscurantism? The latter held possession of the majority of the country, the former of a slight minority composed of the upper class of Moscow. But the court was with the minority, Tsar Alexis furthered the new movement, enlightenment was officially favoured, and Russia's future was secured.

The court of Moscow presented an interesting sight at this time. The Kremlin attained the full development of its architectural beauty; the typical harmony of its configuration was not yet destroyed by those modern superstructures which spoil it in our days; and with the gable roofs of its palaces painted in checks, with the towers of its white wall overlooking the river, with the golden cupolas of its churches and the medley of its belfries rising in the air and glittering in the sunshine, it presented already in those times that same enchanting spectacle which a hundred and fifty years later would stop Napoleon in his march, and interrupt the sombre current of his thought with a moment of æsthetical delight. Inside this Kremlin, in this citadel of palaces and churches, where the hours of the day were marked by ecclesiastical services, where the sacerdotal vestments and the royal mantles intermingled in

[1] A vigorous protest against Moscovian ignorance is presented by the work of G. Kotoshikin, "On Russia under Alexis Mikailovich." Employed in the "Polish Department" of foreign affairs he was versed in all details of contemporary administration. In the sixties he emigrated to Sweden, and there he wrote his work (1666–1667). It was known by a Swedish translation (1682) until 1838, when Professor Solovieff discovered the original manuscript at the University of Upsala.

the gorgeousness of alternating ritual and ceremonial, strange things were taking place in the latter part of the seventeenth century. The Tsar, his family, his court, seemed given over to a new kind of amusement: in the private apartments of the palace, in presence of his Majesty, a German theatrical company gave performances under the direction of Godfried Gregory, the Lutheran clergyman of the German Suburb.

In 1672, three days after the birth of his son Peter, Tsar Alexis ordered Gregory to exhibit a comedy. The first piece given was about Esther and Ahasuerus; then came "Judith," "Joseph," "Adam and Eve," etc.; at first in German, but then Russian boys were intrusted to Pastor Gregory to be taught the art of acting; translations were made into Russian, and finally the first original comedy was written by Simeon of Polotsk. This learned monk was teacher of the Tsar's children, and, at the same time, something like the poet laureate of the court. His comedy, entitled "The Prodigal Son," has been preserved in a very interesting illustrated edition of the time. The author of "The Prodigal Son" took an important part in this literary passion which invaded the court; his lessons were so interesting, so clever, — sometimes in verse to make it easier for the memory, — that the Tsar's daughter for the first time in history since the Tartar yoke, leaves her maiden apartments. Princess Sophia shares the benefits of Simeon's lessons with her eldest brother, Theodor. Later she becomes herself a writer: she composes a tragedy on Esther; she is said to have made attempts at translating Molière, — at any rate Molière's "Physician in spite of himself" was represented in her private apartments.

A man who became a prominent figure during Princess Sophia's regency took part in this performance; this was Prince Galitzin, of whom the Polish envoy, De la Neuville,[1] says that he cherished vast plans of reform; he was of a refined intelligence; and in his mind the necessity of emancipating the peasants, who had been bound to the soil in the last years of the preceding century, already presented itself as an inevitable condition of national prosperity. He can be taken as the precursory specimen of that Russian aristocracy which a century later would swarm round the throne of Catherine the Great — refined, intellectual, but idealistic and with no deep roots in practical life.

Another interesting personality is Ordyn Naschokin, a man widely different from Prince Galitzin, and though of great universality in his interests, very practical in action; he was the first Russian diplomatist. Involved in the hardest difficulties of the Little Russian and the Baltic questions, he gained the esteem of the Swedish and Polish diplomatists with whom he had to deal. A passionate champion of foreign ideas, he was a harsh critic of Moscovite customs, and made numerous enemies in society by his habit of sacrificing personal considerations to affairs. He was an ardent advocate of a Russian sea and a Russian fleet.[2] After his type will be shaped the helpers of Peter the Great. We must mention also Tsar Alexis' intimate friend, Artamon Matveyev. His

[1] "Relation curieuse et nouvelle de la Moscovie." A la Haye, 1699. (English translation. London, 1699.)

[2] How intensely the necessity of a fleet was felt in those days we may see from the fact that Tsar Alexis asked the Duc of Courland whether he would allow him to keep a few vessels in the port of Riga. The Duc answered most sarcastically that the port of Archangel on the Polar Sea would better suit his purposes as being a Russian port.

house was the gathering-place of the intellectual elements of the time; the "German Suburb" enjoyed his warmest sympathies, so that his enemies called him "Father of the Germans"; he had been the first promoter of that theatrical movement of which we spoke.[1] In his house one day, Tsar Alexis met a handsome girl, who impressed him with her soft manners and beautiful black eyes; this was the host's pupil, Nathaly Narishkin. The Tsar was a widower at that time; she became his wife, and on the 30th of May, 1672, brought into the world a son who was called Peter.

Such was the atmosphere in which grew and lived the children of Tsar Alexis. Mild and noble Theodor, who ruled during six years after his father; the energetic and ambitious Sophia, who succeeded, after Theodor's death in 1682, in being proclaimed regent in the name of her two brothers; the delicate and feeble-minded John, and Theodor's god-child little Peter with his black curly hair.[2]

I have tried to picture, as briefly as possible, this curious epoch of gradual intellectual emancipation, — emancipation from religious fanaticism, from national exclusiveness, from a servile obedience to the customs of the forefathers; an interesting epoch which would

[1] His son Andrew was sent by Peter the Great as ambassador extraordinary to Queen Anne of England, in 1706. On the night of the 21st of July, 1708, he was assaulted in the streets of London. He complained to the British government; the affair got before Parliament, which on this occasion passed the "Act for preserving the privileges of ambassadors and other public ministers of Foreign Princes and States," sanctioned by the Queen on the 21st of April, 1709. The act passed by the United States Congress on the 30th of April, 1790, is but a repetition of the one called forth by Matveyev's "troublesome affair."

[2] Peter the Great was Alexis' fourteenth child; only the above mentioned played a part in history.

have counted in history as marking a step of national evolution had it not been put into the shade by the impetuous revolution of the subsequent period. It is the fashion now among those who pretend to depreciate Peter the Great, to insist upon this preparatory period; as they cannot contest the importance of his activity, they attack him from the rear, and declare that the whole reform was ready marked out under his predecessors, thus granting him the merit of a conscientious executor, but refusing all glory of creation. We have seen enough of the preparatory period to form an idea of what it was, and of what Peter had to do: it gave examples of intellectual awakening, scattered in different domains of science, craft, and trade, unconscious of their reciprocal dependence, and incapable of practical transfusion from individual into national life. Peter had to fan these individual sparks into a universal flame; to invigorate the scattered instances with the consciousness of collectivity; to vivify them by practically applying them to the necessities of national life, and to multiply them by the irradiating power of his own example. If anyone should ask us "How did he do it?" — extravagant as it may seem — we should answer with one word, "He lived." Peter the Great lived, and that was enough; his life was the people's life; his learning and labour were his nation's improvement; his advance was the advance of the country; his success was Russia's success.[1]

[1] "Peter is the last and the greatest *hero*. Only Christianity and proximity to our times have saved us (and this only to a certain extent) from a religious worshipping of this demigod, and from mythological recitals about the exploits of this Hercules." (S. Solovieff, "History of Russia," vol. xiv.) "He is a hero in the antique sense: he is in modern times the only specimen of those gigantic natures of which we see so many in

The lad, who became the friend and comrade of the artisans of the "German Suburb," soon left childhood behind him; the military tournaments with the children of domestics and boÿars are soon transformed; that which was a plaything becomes a well-disciplined regiment; the coachman's son Alexashka[1] is the future serene highness, Prince Menshikov, minister of war, and the future field-marshal, Prince Galitzin, is in the ranks of that child-army. The little boats on the pond of the royal garden are too insignificant; arsenals are ransacked; an old boat is found among pieces of armour and household lumber, it is restored and launched on the water; the pond is too small; Peter leaves for the Perciaslav lake and forgets everything on the waves of his favourite element; now and then he sends a few hasty lines to his mother. "Your son Peter, abiding in labour, asks for your blessing and wishes to know of your health. As to us, thanks to your prayers, things are all right. The lake is free of ice, and all the vessels, except the big ship, are finished."[2] "Abiding in labour," —from seventeen till the day of his death, that self-applied epithet will never leave him. The 12th of September, 1689, all plays are put an end to; the partisans of Princess Sophia and those of Peter's mother had come to a bloody conflict; the Princess Regent, who cherished the hope of being crowned, is deposed and relegated to a convent; Peter and John remain the

the misty distance of ages at the foundation and formation of human societies." op. cit. vol. xviii.

[1] Diminutive of Alexander.

[2] "Letters and Papers of the Emperor Peter the Great." Edited by A. Bychkoff, director of the Imperial Public Library of St. Petersburg. Vol. i, No. 6.

masters of the place. But the invalid John does not count; the reign of Peter the Great begins.[1]

It is impossible, in the limited time given to us, to represent the proportions and to follow up the entire course of his reform; in this case I must ask for your collaboration. We are now at the middle of our task; if by what I have heretofore said I have succeeded in giving you some idea of what the country was, I will ask you not to lose memory of the picture: the difference, I hope, will appear of itself, and the contrast will proclaim the importance of him who marks the division of the two epochs. Besides, even had I not succeeded in my efforts, the mere value of those things I shall have to speak of will be eloquent enough of itself. I have had little to say of literature, of science, of art, of social life, of ramification of intellectual currents, of fractions of national self-consciousness; henceforth I shall have to speak of all these, and were I endowed with encyclopædic universality, I should have to speak of mining, engineering, trade, manufactures, etc. I will not undertake the hard task of examining all the springs and levers of the reforms, nevertheless a few remarks on its material side are necessary.

[1] On Peter the Great: A. Brueckner, "Peter der Grosse." Berlin, 1883. Schuyler, "Peter the Great." 2 vols. London, 1884. C. Sadler, "Peter der Grosse als Mensch und Regent." St. Petersburg, 1872. On the epoch: A. Brueckner, "Iwan Possoschkow. Ideen und Zustände in Russland zur Zeit Peter's des Grossen." Leipzig, 1878. Bantysh-Kamensky, "Age of Peter the Great." London, 1851. The first really scientific work in Russian on Peter the Great is Oustrialov's monumental "History of Peter the Great's Reign." 5 vols. St. Petersburg, 1858–1863. Valuable documents in: "Monuments historiques relatifs au règne d'Alexis Michaélovitch, Feodor III et Pierre le Grand, Czars de Russie, extraits des archives du Vatican et de Naples." Par A. Theiner. Rome, Imprimerie du Vatican, 1859.

That which makes Peter's reform so difficult to grasp, is just that simultaneousness of which we spoke awhile ago; it seems to lack system and plan; everything is put in movement at the same time. One main idea can indeed be traced in every single act of his; it is the increase of the country's wealth; all which does not directly aim at that is either a means or a necessary consequence. One of these means was war; it was an expensive one, but the compensations expected were greater than the sacrifices. The campaigns of Peter the Great have a character of their own. It is never for a diplomatic reason or by voracity for adjacent territory that they are undertaken, — you always feel the practical aim at the end. They are not vast, the territories for which he fights, but they are the port of Azov, as entrance to the Black Sea,[1] Derbent on the Caspian, and the shores of the Baltic. And the process of war itself, how different it appears! It quite loses the character of national calamity, of disaster. Those healthy, vigorous regiments in newly adopted foreign uniforms, taught by foreign under-officers, but led by Russian generals, seem to start for a match; a defeat is never a non-success, — it is another lesson learnt, and the profit of the lesson never fails to materialize.

The first campaign against Azov was gained by the Turks. With the energy of a man knowing where his fault lies and how to repair it, Peter rushes into the forests of Varonesh; twenty-six thousand carpenters are set on foot; the Tsar presides over the work; a fleet is being built. "According to God's commandment given to our forefather Adam," he writes, "in the sweat of our brow,

[1] He had to cede it back to Turkey after an unsuccessful campaign in 1711.

we eat our bread." Between November and the next spring the fleet is constructed; the vessels sent down the Don appear before Azov, the port is taken — the lesson had been of profit.

The first conflict with Charles XII of Sweden, which opens the famous "Northern War," brings the dreadful defeat of Narva with the loss of the whole artillery — another lesson. Everything is set on foot this time: men, women, monks, priests, work by order of the Tsar for the equipment and arming of the soldiers; new foundries work day and night, church-bells are melted down; in sixteen months' time three hundred guns are ready. The future field-marshal Sheremetiev takes the command and marches from success to success; Swedish banners sent to Moscow wave in the Kremlin. Peter leaves for the North; with his new artillery, he takes a fortress on the Neva, which, with that rage for German names which at that time invades the national vocabulary, he calls Schlüsselburg; with sixty cutters he rows down the Neva to explore the mouth of the river. Suddenly three Swedish men-of-war appear; there is a fight, the three vessels are captured, the first naval battle is gained, the dream of the forefathers is fulfilled; that country, which, during centuries, had been longing for water, at last quenches her continental thirst.

On the 16th of May Peter goes ashore; a few wooden houses are rapidly put together, he orders it to be a town, a seaport; he calls it St. Petersburg and leaves for the South; the Turkish frontier required his presence. But the great struggle with Sweden is not finished; another terrible but inevitable conflict had to come; it came on the 27th of June, 1709, near Poltava; the "Northern War" had its culminating point in the southwest. The

armies met at four in the morning; at eleven the Swedes were crushed and put to flight; Charles XII, the Swedish hero, wounded and carried on a litter, just escaped captivity. When, a hundred years later, Napoleon I, with his arrogant belief in his star, shall ask the envoy of Alexander I, "What is the shortest way to get to Moscow?" — Balashov will answer with courtesy, "There are several ways, Your Majesty, — Charles XII chose the way of Poltava." From that day the curtain rises before Europe, and Russia enters the scene of universal history. But Peter takes the matter from another side: "The opposing army," he writes, "has met the fate of Phaeton. To-day, definitely, a stone has been laid in St. Petersburg's foundation with the help of God." Always the practical end.[1]

Those who may take the trouble of studying Peter the Great's campaigns will see how little credit is deserved by that famous document known as the "Will of Peter the Great," in which he is represented as entreating his successors never to abandon the idea of conquering the world. This document, which is said by some critics to have been forged by order of Napoleon, when he raised all Europe against Russia,[2] is just the contrary of the reformer's views on the sense of war. But "habent sua fata libelli" — people who know nothing about

[1] Voltaire in his "History of Peter the Great," which has no scientific value, has well struck the characteristic note of Peter's campaigns when he says that the battle of Poltava was the only one in universal history which had not a destructive but a constructive significance.

[2] Bergholz, "Napoléon I, auteur du testament de Pierre le Grand." Brussels, 1863. Others attribute to Napoleon only the publishing and spreading of the document. Some think the chevalier D'Eon, secret agent of Louis XV, at the court of the Empress Elizabeth to be its author. (On this curious personage: Gaillardet, "Mémoire sur la chevalière d'Eon.")

Russian history know the "Will of Peter the Great," and it was the first thing I was asked about when I reached Japan; English political pamphlets had taken the trouble of spreading it in the Empire of the Rising Sun. But then why that extension to the Pacific, people will ask? We will answer that question by and by. Now Peter the Great is waiting, or rather he is not; his walking pace in life was such that people had to run in order to keep up with him; his historical pace is as rapid and hasty.

We have seen that his campaigns had the object of increasing the commercial contact of his people with other nations by extending its maritime frontiers.[1] What an effort it must have required to carry out the plan, can be gathered from the following figures. On his accession Peter inherited from his predecessor an undisciplined and badly provided military force of about 200,000 men; at his death, in 1725, he left a regular army of 200,000 and an irregular one of 100,000 men; a fleet of 48 ships of the line and 800 small vessels, with a crew of 30,000 men and 9000 guns. And in spite of that the income which in 1710 was three and one-half millions of roubles increased towards 1725 to ten millions;[2] before Peter the silver money was scarcely half a million, under Peter it reached over five millions.[3]

Thus war was a means of learning and enriching,

[1] In 1722, one hundred and sixteen ships arrived at St. Petersburg. In 1724, two hundred and forty.

[2] The relation of the rouble of that time to the actual rouble (½ dollar) is of 9 to 1.

[3] On Russian numismatics: Krug, "Zur Münzenkunde Russlands." St. Petersburg, 1805. A. Brueckner, "Das Kupfergeld (1656–1663) in Russland." Riga, 1863. Chandoir, "Monnaies Russes."

but there were also immediate measures directed to the increase of national wealth. Peter not only sets his people in movement, he awakes the soil of the country, he shakes the slumbering earth; iron, coal, naphtha, — all the natural resources, — are simultaneously grasped at in different parts of the country, "in order," says one of his decrees, "that God's blessing should not remain useless under the earth." A system of canals is undertaken by which the Neva is united to the Volga, the Baltic to the Caspian;[1] two hundred and fifty manufactures are opened in a few years; privileges of all kinds are granted in order to further collective commercial enterprises and to allure foreign dealers; but in order that the foreign element should not overbalance in the scale of national economy, Russian students are constantly sent abroad; Russians learn from foreigners, but they always keep their rank, they are pupils — never passive organs. Russian soldiers were trained by German and Swedish under-officers; but the battles in which the Swedes had been defeated were gained by Russian generals. The lad who began his practical education in the German Suburb, dazzled by the superiority of Dutch and German carpenters, was an obedient pupil and an enraptured friend of the Swiss Lefort, the bankrupt merchant from Geneva who related such wonderful stories about foreign countries,[2] and of the Dutch Timmerman who was the first to show him the use of the astrolabe.

[1] On Peter's canalization-works: Wittenheim, "Ueber Russlands Wasserverbindungen." Mitau and Leipzig, 1842. Stuckenberg, "Beschreibung aller in Russischen Reiche gegrabenen oder projectierten Kanäle." St. Petersburg, 1841.

[2] Dr. Moritz Posselt, "Der General und Admiral Franz Lefort. Sein Leben und seine Zeit." 2 B. Frankfort-on-the-Main, 1866.

But he goes abroad,[1] he becomes himself a handworker, he works in the docks of Saardam and Deptford, and when he returns home with the superiority of a monarch, who can with his own hands build a ship even to its slightest detail, his former friends, who had exercised an influence, so long as they held his young imagination, lose all importance. That sovereign, who is so much accused by the so-called national party for his propensity to foreigners, leaves the state affairs at his death exclusively in Russian hands. Russian students come back, and new schools are founded — always with the same practical purpose. Till this time schools had been a sort of appendix to monasteries, the instruction given took no account of the variety of life's exigencies, it was the same for everyone and consisted, in addition to primitive notions of writing and reading, in moral teaching aiming at the salvation of the soul. "But I want schools," exclaims Peter, impatiently, in a conversation with Patriarch Hadrian, "schools that shall prepare people for all necessities, for civil and military service, including the arts of building, of medicine." In all elementary schools, under the supervision of the provincial clergy, arithmetic and geometry were introduced. Then came a sort of high schools, of the classical type, with Greek and Latin; others with mathematics, German, or French. Moreover, special technical schools are founded: in Moscow, a medical school attached to the hospital[2] and a

[1] See Macaulay's opinion on Peter's journey, which he considers an epoch not only in Russian, or even in European, but in universal history. "History of England," chap. ix, p. 84.

[2] On medicine in Russia before the nineteenth century: Richter, "Geschichte der Medicin in Russland." Moscow, 1813–1817.

"School of Navigation"[1]; in Petersburg, a naval academy and an engineering school.

The institution of the Senate in 1711 is an important act which had been practically suggested by Peter's frequent absences; it was the highest juridical instance, and it had supervision over all governmental functions.

The so-called "Colleagues" (collegium) became something like our ministries; they were ten in number, and their institution is due to the suggestion of Leibnitz. In the following emphatic terms the famous German philosopher explains their object: "As in a watch, one wheel puts in movement the other, just so in the great governmental mechanism, one 'collegium' furthers the activity of another, and when all shall be in absolute proportion and perfect harmony, then the watch hand of wisdom will mark for the country hours of prosperity." Surely the author of the "Pre-established Harmony" knew what he meant, and was actuated by a touching confidence in the beneficency of his advice; but no less touching is the confidence of that sovereign, a handworker in the practice of government, who expects to get help from the abstractions of speculative philosophy.[2] The "collegia" concentrated the military, financial, and other affairs concerning the general wealth of the country; the towns were entrusted with local self-government, the land was divided into provinces or "governments" under the supervision of governors. None of these institutions was subordinate to any

[1] One of the professors of that school was Magnitsky, the author of the "Arithmetic," the first Russian scientific manual (1703).

[2] See M. Posselt, "Peter der Grosse und Leibnitz." Dorpat and Moscow, 1843. W. Guerrier, "Leibnitz in seinen Beziehungen zu Russland und Peter dem Grosse." St. Petersburg and Leipzig, 1873.

other, but all depended directly upon the Senate. Thus the administrative mechanism established by Peter the Great presented not an hierarchical scale, but a circle of institutions grouping themselves around the Senate, the plural representative of the individual monarchical power.

The same practical interest which underlay every measure of his, determined the new basis on which the governmental taxes were established. Formerly the tithed land was taxed; this had the ill result of leading the peasants to diminish the quantity of cultivated soil. In the seventeenth century the land was relieved from tithes, and the tax transferred to the farms; but then, in order to diminish their payments, as many peasants as possible gathered on the same farm. Peter the Great then introduced the capitation or so-called "soil-tax";[1] every man had to pay for himself, and as the quantity of cultivated land had no influence on the proportion of the tax, the working force of the country was restored to the soil.

The military reform was a most important act. Before Peter the Great, the nobility had to provide for the supply of military forces, somewhat as under the feudal system in Western Europe.[2] Under Peter the Great the recruiting of the army becomes one of the functions of the government, and the nobility is put on the same level as other classes. Thus the intermediate period between the decay of feudalism and the introduction of a regular conscription, which in western countries

[1] Inanimate things in Russian are counted by "pieces," cattle by "heads," human beings by "souls."

[2] On ancient Russian military organization: Brix, "Geschichte der alten russischen Heereseinrichtungen." Berlin, 1867.

brought forth the irregularities of the so-called "violent enrolment," was unknown in Russia. Whereas in Austria, as late as 1818, a decree was issued forbidding churches to be used as traps for recruiting soldiers,[1] in Russia, thanks to Peter's reform, a regular system of conscription is established as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century.[2]

Such were in brief the measures, or rather such was the direction of those innumerable measures, taken by Peter the Great, which followed one another with confusing rapidity in the interior of the country, while the struggle for the seashores was going on on the frontiers.

In 1721 the last act of the Northern War was accomplished; it was the peace of Neistadt, by which the whole southern litoral of the Baltic from St. Petersburg down to the frontier of the Courland Duchy and a part of Finland were ceded to Russia. Peter the Great made his entry into the young city which was not yet the capital, but already the favourite of the sovereign, who called it "my paradise."[3] The senators and ministers were waiting with impatience for his return. On the 22d of October, in the Trinity Church, in presence of the Tsar, the text of the peace treaty was read to the people; after the reading, Chancellor Golovkin, at the head of the Senate, advanced, and in the name of the country begged the Tsar to accept the title of Em-

[1] Meinert, "Geschichte des Kriegswesens," quoted by A. Rediger. "Recruitment and Organization of Military Force." St. Petersburg, 1892 (Russian).

[2] On military service in Russia: A. Leroy-Beaulieu in "Revue des Deux Mondes." June 1, 1877.

[3] See Reimers, "Petersburg am Ende seines ersten Jahrhunderts." St. Petersburg, 1805.

peror and "father of the fatherland, for having brought us from non-existence into existence."

Such was the worker; such the work.[1] In our rapid sketch we have pictured them as they present themselves to posterity; but how did contemporaries accept them? We have seen that his immediate collaborators offered him the title of Emperor, and there is evidence to show that they had a keen insight into the significance of the events of contemporary history, and a great power of synthetical appreciation. But the rest? The rest, the great majority, scarcely understood anything, and we must say that a great part of the fault lay in the methods with which the reform was carried out, and in some respects even in the reform itself. The fact that no well-established programme was set before the people, left the masses in the dark as to the aim of that which was going on under their eyes. The official gazette, published by Peter's order, registered facts, spoke of methods, but maintained no system, insisted upon no plan. This absence of well-understood aim deprived the Tsar's activity of all creative element. The people saw the destruction of the old order, but the new escaped their comprehension; and things were too deeply rooted for their extraction not to hurt. The reform was practical, it aimed at material prosperity, — people could not help acknowledging that; but it was *too* practical, it was nothing but practical; and this was the inner germ of the hindrance to its wide acceptance. To

[1] On Peter's reform a contemporary book by the Brunswick resident at St. Petersburg: Weber, "Das veränderte Russland." Frankfort, 1721. English translation. London, 1723. On "contemporary" works about Russia: Hermann, "Zeitgenossische Berichte zur Geschichte Russlands." Leipzig, 1872.

make people accept a practical reform, it is not enough to show single examples of its application; you must bring them to believe in the continuousness of its beneficent result and in the superiority of the principle in the name of which the reform is effected. But to make people believe whatever it may be, you must touch the spirit, the soul; practical teaching alone is insufficient, — a moral educational element is needed, and this was absent in the didactic side of Peter the Great's activity. *Now* we believe in him, for we have acquired that moral education which he neglected for what he considered of more urgent importance; and, enriched with that moral education, we *now* judge his work and approve of it, for we fill up its one-sidedness with what has been learned in later years; but in his time only those few who were already educated, or who were endowed with extraordinary natural gifts, could understand him, and these did believe in him. The customs, opinions, creeds of the people were hurt at every innovation. The compulsory shaving, the so-called "German dress,"[1] the new chronology beginning with Christ's birth instead of the creation of the world, the new year beginning in January instead of September, the compulsory participation of women in social gayeties,[2] only education could reconcile people to such arbitrary changes, but education is a slow process.

It is easy for us at the end of the nineteenth century to criticise what he was doing at the beginning of the eighteenth. What could Peter do in the short space of

[1] A. Brueckner, "Bilder aus der Russischen Vergangenheit." Leipzig, 1887.

[2] On the customs of the time, a contemporary book: Bergholz's diary. German, in "Buesching's Magazin." XIX–XXII.

a man's life? How was it possible to educate a grown-up generation? Instead of losing time in educating them, he ordered them to act as if they were educated people. Some obeyed, others grumbled, and there were those who under simulated obedience concealed active opposition. During his whole life Peter had to work under the constant threat of hostile elements, creeping out like reptiles from the clefts of the old edifice. And the darkest plot of reaction he found in his own family.

Alexis, the son of his first wife Eudoxia Lopouhin, inherited from his mother a hatred for Peter's innovations. From the cell of the convent to which she had been relegated, she never ceased instigating him; but he needed no instigating. He confesses to the priest that he hates his father, and that often he happens to form the wish his father were dead. "God will forgive you," answers the priest; "we all wish the same thing."[1] Terrible, tragic — the whisper of this double confession overheard by history. One day the father learns all. Alexis flees; he is pursued, but he escapes. In Italy, at Naples, in sight of the beautiful bay, he spends his last hour of liberty. He was hunted down and brought back. A supreme court was appointed to judge him; he was condemned to death. "But the condemnation," adds official history of the time, "could not be carried out, for on that very night the Tsarevitch died in his prison."

Constantine the Great had executed his son Crispus; Frederick the Great narrowly escaped being executed by his father. Family tragedies are the sombrest aspects of human life, but they are like eclipses of the sun when they occur on the throne. Fortunately eclipses are

[1] S. Solovieff, "Public Lectures on Peter the Great" (Russian).

but for the moment. What would have happened had Tsarevitch Alexis succeeded Peter the Great? History is mysterious and profound enough as it is, to prevent us from scrutinizing the abyss of probabilities. Great characters have great sufferings. What greater suffering can we imagine for a man than to see the gigantic work of his life undermined and compromised by his own son? What a refined combination of cruelty destiny displayed by embodying the gloom of ignorance, the resistance of prejudice, and the immovability of centuries in that one individual who, by the fact of his birth, could strike at the same time the heart of the sovereign and the heart of the father! Peter suffered. Who is the man who can find in his own soul such a complexity of feelings as might measure *that* suffering? "I suffer," he writes, "and all for my fatherland. Hard is it to discern my innocence for him who does not know the whole of this affair. God sees the truth." Alexis left a wife, a German by birth, Princess Sophia of Blankenstein,[1] and an infant son, the future Peter II.[2]

Moral torment and physical exertion had undermined Peter's health. Full-blooded and vigorous, of a preternatural strength, the great worker "abiding in labour" had to succumb to his own work. We have had a look into this work, and have seen that feverish activity, the mere recital of which is enough to take away one's breath. But we cannot form an idea of the whirlwind of Peter's life. He was always either leaving or returning;

[1] See Guerrier, "Die Kronprincessin Scharlotte von Russland." Bonn, 1875.

[2] See A. Brueckner, "Der Zarevitsch Alexis (1690–1719)." Heidelberg, 1880. E. Hermann, "Peter der Grosse und der Zarevich Alexis." Leipzig, 1880. Vte de Vogüé, "Le fils de Pierre le Grand." Paris, 1884.

from Astrachan to Archangel, from the Baltic to the Caucasus, he was in all corners of his land, and his continuous writing, his never-ceasing decrees, spreading through the country, and penetrating into the slightest details of practical life, made him omnipresent at every hour of his reign. His absences were perhaps more terrible than his presence, for they preceded his returns, and Heaven knows what a return of Peter the Great meant for his ministers and senators. When seeing him off on one of his campaigns the Senate asked him for his orders: "I told you not to sleep," he answered; "and I repeat, don't sleep, and once again, don't sleep." And all his life he was acting as if people were snoring round him; he was constantly wakening them and shaking them up. How did he manage to find time amidst this activity for verifying the translations of foreign technical manuals which were being made by his order? He scolds a man for having translated too literally a German manual of fortification: "Enough, if you grasp the sense," he writes; "but then put it into our language so that it may read as intelligibly as possible." During thirty-six years the whole country was on the go; towards the end people began to feel tired; a sort of relaxation followed Peter's death; the workers took rest, yet the work stood firm, —it cannot perish, and this is perhaps the greatest test of the enormousness of his effort, that he made it impossible for the country to turn back.

In November, 1725, Peter was yachting on the Neva, when he saw a boat which had just run aground; he hastened to save the people, spent the whole afternoon in the water, caught cold and did not recover. In the rush of his life he probably seldom thought of death; on his dying bed he asked for pen and paper. He began to

write, but the hand obeyed no more. Of all he wrote two words only could be made out: "give everything."[1] In his funeral oration, Theophan Prokopovich, archbishop of Novgorod,[2] one of the most ardent adherents of the reform and its untiring commentator in the pulpit,[3] said these memorable words: "Though he abandoned us through the destruction of his body, in departing, he left us his spirit."

Peter's wife, Martha Skavronsky, was the pupil of a Lithuanian clergyman; first, housemaid of Prince Menschikov, then the Tsar's wife, and after his death Empress Catherine I. Simple, illiterate, but bright and lively, she suited Peter's character; she kept up to his pace; she followed him in his campaigns. She presented him with two daughters: Elizabeth, who reigned from 1742 to 1762; and Anna, who married Charles Frederick, Prince of Holstein, and became mother of the future Peter III, husband of Catherine the Great.

Few questions in history have been made the object of such contestation as the value of Peter the Great's reform. That double impression which it made on his contemporaries divides the opinion of posterity into two adverse currents; still with the difference that among Peter's contemporaries only the ignorant raised

[1] Is it on these two words the authors of "Peter the Great's Will" have based that document, the whole sense of which means, "take everything"?

[2] He was Peter's helper in the reorganization of the church administration. His biography by Bayer (?) in Scherer's "Nordische Nebenstunden." Frankfort and Leipzig, 1776. A few details on Peter's views on church questions in "La Sorbonne et la Russie (1717-1747)." Paris, 1882, by P. Pierling, S.J.

[3] "Theophan Prokopovich was the first representative of the new tendency — the *secularization of Russian thought*." P. Morozov, "Theophan Prokopovich as a Writer." St. Petersburg, 1888 (Russian).

their voices against the reform, reviled the reformer, and even called him anti-Christ, whereas in our days cultured and learned people, serious investigators of history who live and work upon the benefits of the reform, turn their criticism against it.

Peter the Great is accused of having turned his country out of its natural course; of having trampled upon the national spirit in order to impose the foreign culture of Western Europe. "He fell in love with Europe," says one of our writers;[1] and he accuses the reformer of having cut to the root the tree of national life, and of having substituted an exotic plant unfitted for the soil. Peter is charged with having made his country the moral prey of foreign pre-eminence; with having "turned into the muddy street of the German Suburb."

"But the streets of old Moscow," observes one of the most conscientious investigators of national thought, "were not less muddy."[2] For his violence and cruelty people have compared him to John the Terrible; forgetting that John had shaped his reign according to his bad instincts, whereas Peter shaped his according to his talents, and gave way to instincts only because of the overpowering exuberance of his nature. His other personal defects, his carelessness of the dignity of his rank, his excesses in drinking, his orgies with common sailors, have been cited as so many points of accusation. People really seem to forget of what times

[1] Danilevsky, "Russia and Europe." St. Petersburg, 1888 (Russian). As a counterpart we may mention the sceptical opinion according to which Peter's reform could have been imposed only upon a country which had no history and whose past presented a perfect "tabula rasa." (Chaadayev in his "Apology of an Insane Man," 1837.)

[2] A. N. Pypin, "Beginnings of a New Movement." "European Messenger," December, 1894 (Russian).

they speak. Read the memoirs of the Margravine of Bayreuth, Frederick the Great's sister; you will see what was going on at her father's court in Berlin in this same eighteenth century. And what did stout Frederick William of Brandenburg do to expiate his brutalities? But as he was a brute nobody mentions him, whereas a great man's faults are registered so as to form a regular indictment. I wish public opinion would always show itself as severe to vice as it often does when vice is combined with superior gifts. History bases its judgment on a different standard; the violence of the sovereign, the tremendous strain of the nation's forces, and the chaotic torment of its spirit were the labour from which New Russia received life.

The hardest accusations come from the Slavophiles; those advocates of the union of the great Slavonian race as a counterpart to the Latin-German world, those celebrators of the high spiritual gifts granted to "Holy Russia" in preference to the "rotten West," have proclaimed Peter the Great a betrayer of his people, of his country, and of their history.[1] We have to shake off, it is said, this servile imitation of Western Europe. "At home, at home,"[2] must be found the inspiration of Russian life.[3] A Russian thinker cannot to-day hold by the opinion of Peter's greatness without being pushed into the corner of exclusiveness and accused of "West-

[1] C. Aksakov.

[2] J. Aksakov. Leading article in the "Russ," after the catastrophe of the 1st of March, 1881. (Murder of Alexander II.)

[3] In 1861 the critic Appollon Grigoryev was congratulating his time upon the disappearance of the two adverse currents — the *western* and the *eastern* ("Development of the National Idea in our Literature since Poushkin's Death"). Thirty-five years later we see how premature a similar statement would be even to-day.

ernism," which in its last expression becomes synonymous with "anti-patriotism."[1]

If I have insisted upon these two currents of Russian thought, it is not because I pretend to take advantage of the opportunity to contend with some of my countrymen, but because I think that intestine polemics being an important factor among the indexes of national intellectual life, ought not to be neglected by foreign students. National self-consciousness is a great helper to the observer, more than that, it is perhaps the only secure source from which he can get those elements of knowledge necessary for forming an adequate opinion of a nation. You may read as many foreign books as you wish about a country, you will not know it before you have read its national books; you will have learned many things *about* the country; you will scarcely know anything *of* the country. How often are we Russians asked by foreigners: "But why do you know other nations, and pretend that nobody knows you?" My vehement compatriots generally exclaim at this: "Because you are more barbarous than we whom you accuse of barbarism." No, of two cultured gentlemen who discuss questions of universal history, neither is a barbarian; the difference comes from another cause. If Russia knows other nations, it is because she has learnt their history from their books (which of course did not prevent us from writing our own after we had read theirs); whereas Russia's history is, till to-day, known to other countries from foreign books. We do not deny that

[1] On Slavophiles: Mackenzie Wallace, "Russia," vol. ii, chap. xxvi. A. Leroy-Beaulieu, "L'Empire des Tsars et les Russes." T. i, l. iv, chap. i. Gerebtsoff, "Histoire de la Civilization en Russie." 2 vols. Paris, 1858. Doverin, "L'Esprit National sous Alexandre III."

observation is a chief means of learning, with which no science can dispense, yet history requires the collaboration of two meeting currents; the judgment of the observer and the self-consciousness of him who is observed. It depends upon the talent of the historian to combine them afterwards by the power of his criticism; but if the element of national self-consciousness has not been taken in consideration, the work of the observer will be like a tourist's description: it may reveal many valuable qualities in the author, it will not unveil that of which he writes; it will give an insight into his soul, — not into the soul of the subject.[1] This is why we turn, with a particular interest, to the study of the next period. Our eighteenth century is nothing but the reform being made conscious. Before Peter the Great Russia was the object of national feeling, after him she becomes the object of national thought.

[1] Who will question the talent of Milton or Voltaire? Yet Russia's history by the first ("A Brief History of Moscovia." London, 1682), and the "History of Peter the Great," by the latter, have no place in the bibliography of Russian history.

The most voluminous history of the reign of Peter the Great accessible to English readers is that by Eugene Schuyler, LL.D. 2 vols. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1884. See also, Rambaud's "History of Russia," edited by Nathan Haskell Dole. Boston, 1880. Vol. II.

LECTURE V

(1725-1796)

The eighteenth century, — significance of the date. Brief sketch from Peter I to Catherine II. The Academy of Science. Peter the Great's depositaries. Tatischev, Prince Kantemir.

Lomonossov, — the scientist, the poet. Russian pseudo-classicism, — Soumarokov, Trediakofsky. Peter's reform under Empress Elizabeth.

Accession of Catherine the Great. An autographical portrait. French philosophy in Russia. Pseudo-classicism, — Derjavine. Satire, — the Empress, Von Wiezin. "The Under-aged." On the threshold of the century.

LECTURE V

(1725-1796)

Thought, once awakened, shall not again slumber. — CARLYLE.

WHEN a writer, speaking of intellectual or literary movements in Russia, mentions the eighteenth century, whatever extension he means to give to this term, the reader confines it to the reign of Catherine the Great. The splendour of this showy reign is not the only reason why the name of the Empress seems to absorb the century. Peter the Great, standing on the threshold of two centuries, belongs chronologically to both; moreover he does not embody a period, he marks a historical moment; he is an era, not an epoch. Figures like his root deeper and rise higher than their own time, they are not what we call "representative," and we should commit a historical error were we to apply to individuals who make their time the same measure as to those who represent it. In spite of all "precursory symptoms," in spite of his helpers and contemporary admirers, Peter the Great belongs to some superior region, outside the beaten track of chronological succession; he is no index of a century, just as an aerolite is no index of geological formation. Thus in the memory of posterity he does not monopolize the eighteenth century, he vacates it

for his successors. Among these the name of Catherine the Great has to fear no competition. Her personal talents, the superior qualities of her helpers, the great scale on which she carried on her diplomatic intercourse, a series of successes obtained by the Russian arms by land and sea, — all this is enough to make her the central figure of the century. Her one reign, which lasted from 1762 till 1796, is as long as all the reigns of her predecessors since Peter the Great.

Besides these historical or national reasons there are reasons of a higher, more universal order, why "Catherine's epoch" has become synonymous with the eighteenth century. The date in this case is taken not in its historical but in its philosophical significance, — the significance it has when applied to the intellectual movement of Western Europe, and more specially to France. The activity of Russian minds of this time was the immediate repercussion of French intelligence. Russian literature trod in the footprints of the writers who, though belonging to the preceding century, reigned in the eighteenth with indisputable authority: pseudo-classicism in literature and cyclopædism in philosophical thought are the marks of the time in Russia no less than in Western Europe. Independently of the course taken by historical events in different countries, a homogeneous intellectual spirit traverses the whole of Europe, East as well as West. Thus, in spite of the difference between the excesses of the great revolution on one side and the enforced observation of the monarchical inviolability on the other, Europe's eighteenth century is Russia's eighteenth century, — it is the first coincidence of universal and Russian chronology.

In a few strokes let us retrace the epoch between Peter the Great's death in 1725 and the accession of Catherine the Great in 1762. After two years of the reign of Catherine I (Peter I's wife) came three years of Peter II, son of the unfortunate Tsarevich Alexis. Then came from 1730 to 1740 Empress Anna, Duchess of Courland, niece of Peter the Great, and daughter of his invalid brother John. She left the throne to her niece, Duchess Anna of Brunswick,[1] who ruled in the name of her son, the infant John VI. It was a sombre epoch; conspiracies, favouritism, foreign intrigue, diplomatic briberies, reduced the national history to a series of palace revolutions; every change of reign was marked by executions or exiles of the previous favourites.[2] It was a time of German inundation, when all kinds of foreign adventurers swarmed round the throne. The national party grouped itself round a woman who lived retired and never interfered in politics. Exhorted by her friends, among whom the French envoy De la Chétardie played a prominent part, she finally yields to their insistences and, when everything is said to be ready for the "coup d'état," on one November night of 1741 she appears in the barracks of Peter the Great's favourite guards regiment. "Do you remember whose daughter I am?" she exclaims. A loud "hurrah!" resounds, and the daughter of Peter the Great is escorted to the palace. The Brunswick princess is dis-

[1] Married to Anton Ulrich, Duke of Brunswick. Her mother Catherine, married to Charles Leopold, Duke of Mecklenburg, was the eldest sister of Empress Anna.

[2] On the epoch: Winkelmann, "Russland und Ernst Johannes Byron," in "Baltische Monatsschrift." Band XV, Heft 5. Contemporary: Manstein, "Mémoire historique, politique et militaire sur la Russie." London, 1772.

possessed,[1] the infant John VI is imprisoned, the German favourites are arrested, Empress Elizabeth ascends the throne. She sends to Germany for her nephew, the son of her sister Anna,[2] — Prince Charles Peter Ulrich of Schleswig-Holstein, and this last male descendant of Peter the Great is declared the heir to the throne.[3] He marries Princess Frederica of Anhalt Zerbst, who, eighteen years later, became Catherine the Great.

Such is the historical succession of events. Let us consider now what constituted the intellectual life brought forth by the reform.

The figure of Peter the Great lived powerful and undiminished in the minds of his contemporaries and of the next generation; all who had to work amidst the political staggering of the period that followed his reign, found the necessary energy only in the impulse once given by his vigorous hand. In the year before his death Peter had issued a decree ordering "an academy to be instituted in which languages should be taught, as well as other sciences and precious arts, and books should be translated. For arts and sciences generally, two kinds of institutions are common: universities and academies; yet in Russia that cannot be adopted which is common in other lands; one must take into consideration the state of this country. The institution of an academy only is

[1] On the Brunswick family: A. Brueckner, "Die Familie Braunschweig in Russland im XVIII Jahrhunderte." St. Petersburg, 1867.

[2] Married to Charles Frederik, Duke of Holstein.

[3] He equally had rights to the throne of Sweden and to the throne of Russia. Through his mother he was the grandson of Peter the Great; through his father the grandson of Charles XII's sister. Thus Peter III combined in his person the two great adversaries of the eighteenth century.

insufficient, because it is incapable of spreading knowledge rapidly among the people; universities as well are useless so long as there are as yet no gymnasiums or colleges; consequently an institution has to be founded consisting of the most learned men. These learned men must not only themselves study and advance science but must also teach young men publicly, and besides this keep a certain number of scholars attached to their persons, so that they may afterwards show the basis of all science to others." This scheme impresses us not so much by the extensiveness of its programme, as by the immensity of the vacuum it was expected to fill up. The Academy was opened at St. Petersburg under Catherine I.

The first scientists were German. These official transplanters of Western culture do not interest us in our particular case; we are rather interested in those who adapted, than in those who transplanted, all the more because from the moment the national element grew up to the level of an independent scientific value, the foreign element showed itself hostile. Lomonossov, the greatest name of the century, was persecuted all his life by his German colleagues. Besides, however honourable and conscientious their work may have been in transplanting foreign science,[1] they evidently could have no part in the implanting of Russian literature. In speaking of "implantation" we use the official term: "implantation of fine art" stood in the list of the

[1] Among these the most prominent were: Bayer, Mueller, and Schloezer. They rendered valuable services to Russian science in geology, geography, ethnology, philology, and history. We mentioned in due place Schloezer's work on Nestor and the annals. His autobiography: "Augustus Ludwig Schloezer's Oeffentliche- und Privatleben von ihm selbst

Academy's duties.[1] But, at the beginning, the cultivation of the arts was subordinate to scientific activity, and the real meaning of this command of Peter the Great, as pointing to an independent development of literature as such, was not realized till later. The literary essays of this first post-petrinian period bear the stamp of the practical character infused by the reformer into the minds of his helpers who became allies and agents of the reform. A group of intelligent men, different as to their social origin and education, became the delegates of him who was gone but "had left us his spirit." The house of Theophan Prokopovich, the archbishop of Novgorod whom we have already mentioned, was the place where foreign and national elements chiefly gathered and exchanged ideas. This prelate, who lived amidst a library of thirty thousand volumes, had a favourite adage which equally characterizes his tastes and his aspirations: "*Uti boni vini non est quærenda regio, sic nec boni viri religio et patria.*"[2] In the good harmony which could not but flourish under such principles, German professors, Russian clergy, and workers for the enlightenment of Russia intermingled and discussed.

Two men among these have inscribed their names, the one on the first page of Russian historical science, the other on the first page of Russian literature. The first was Tatischev, son of a land proprietor who had been employed by Peter the Great for geological and geo-

geschrieben." Göttingen, 1802. His biography by his son. Leipzig, 1828.

[1] A. N. Pypin, "Lomonossov and his Contemporaries." "European Messenger," March, 1895 (Russian).

[2] "As the place whence a good wine comes need not be asked after, so it is with a good man's religion and country."

graphical explorations.[1] He made valuable researches in the old chronicles, and wrote the first "Russian History." The ante-Mongolian period was an object of his minute study; a list of annals and other documents up to the time of Theodor, John the Terrible's son, was compiled by him. Many historical documents of which the originals have perished are known to-day, thanks to Tatischev's quotations and commentaries.

The other was Prince Kantemir (1708–1744), Moldavian by birth, educated in Russia. First, officer in the guards, later, under Empress Anna, ambassador in London and Paris, he was a man of broad culture who knew Greek and Latin, and spoke four European and two Eastern languages, — Turkish and Persian. This zealous adherent of new ideas devoted his pen to their dissemination and wrote the first Russian verses. They were satires directed against those who for different reasons resisted the reform; or, misunderstanding its spirit, adopted a mere exterior imitation. Bigotry, materialism, junketing, and foppery are ridiculed and condemned.[2] The Satires of Kantemir are an important document, but have no artistic value; the tone is didactic and heavy, the language uncouth; though their subjects are thoroughly Russian and contemporary, the author himself avows that he "steps in the footprints" of Boileau, Horace, Juvenal, and Persius. For a long time will Russian poets step in these footprints, and, in the high-heeled shoes of French rhetoric, stumble on the uneasy

[1] The first geographical atlas and map of Russia was edited by Kirilov, Secretary of the Senate, in 1734. On old Russian maps: Dr. H. Michov, "Die ältesten Karten von Russland, ein Beitrag zur historischen Geographie." Hamburg, 1884.

[2] French translation with a biography. London, 1749 (2d ed. 1750).

and slippery floor of pseudo-classicism; but the day will come when they shall realize that poetry means life, and that the prairies and forests of their native land, and the pains and dreams of the national soul, are a worthier and richer source of inspiration than the mythological altars and powdered wigs of foreign tragedy. Literary forms were coming from abroad; poetry had to gush out of the soil. Just so in nature — invigorating light comes from above, active force comes from the earth. The earth had not yet spoken; she did so in the next generation.

One cold December night, in a village on the bank of the Northern Dwina, the door of a fisherman's hut was opened, a boy of sixteen came out, looked round, and with a few books under his arm hastened away on the highroad. This was in 1730: the name of the village was Holmogory; it lies not far from the port of Archangel; the name of the boy was Michael Lomonossov; the road led to Moscow. Why was he flying, and why to Moscow? He did not know exactly, but he had read three books, — a Slavonian grammar, an arithmetic, and David's Psalms put into verse, — and he felt that beyond these books lay wider horizons. In the port of Archangel, where he used to accompany his father when about to go fishing in the Arctic Ocean, he had seen foreign ships and foreign people, and he felt that beyond the sea lay new horizons of countries, nations, languages, and that they could be reached. He had heard, during his childhood, of that emperor who had died in 1725, and had brought such changes among his people — new dress, new customs, even Russian ships, schools with wonderful learning; and, abandoning his father's trade and freeing himself from the persecutions

of a brutal step-mother, on this December night he fled to Moscow. He joined a caravan of merchants on the road, and in January reached that town where twenty-five years later he was to found a university. By an unexpected chance, he was admitted to the Slavo-Greco-Latin Academy; a few years later he was sent to the Academy of St. Petersburg, and when, in 1736, the three best students were chosen to be sent abroad, Lomonossov was one of the three.

Five years of study and all sorts of adventures carry him through a course of philosophy under the direction of Christian von Wolf in Marburg, a course of natural science in Freiburg under Henckel, a marriage with the daughter of a Marburg tailor, a conscription in the ranks of a German regiment, an incarceration in the fortress of Wesel, a successful escape, and finally a happy return. Back in St. Petersburg he becomes a member of the Academy, and is soon put at the head of the physical and geographical department. From this time begins a life of labour and study which had, as its result, the foundation of Russian science, the emancipation of the Russian language from its heavy antiquated forms, and the beginning of Russian poetry.

Hard were these first years of work; miserable the state of the Academy at that time. The best German professors had left, only mediocrity remained; personal ambition and international hatred poisoned the atmosphere of the institution where science was called to dwell. "The Academy without academicians, the chancery without members, the rules without authority, and, for the rest, a confusion up to this time irremediable."[1]

[1] French text quoted by A. Wassilchikov, "The Razoumovsky Family." 4 vols. St. Petersburg, 1880–1887 (Russian). This most entertaining

In such terms the secretary of the Academy describes the state of things, and under such circumstances had Lomonossov to get to work. But the moral energy which had had the force of delivering him from the darkness of his condition would not shrink before such obstacles. The accession of Empress Elizabeth, however, the triumph of the national spirit, and the special personal benevolence of Peter the Great's daughter, by and by improved his situation.

The work of Lomonossov was divided between natural science and literature; but these two words which indicate its direction appear insufficient and poor if applied to its results. Poushkin calls Lomonossov "our first University." What better characterization of his figure can we give? He was in the domain of intellectual life what Peter the Great had been in the domain of practical life. That faculty of embodying and irradiating which constituted the chief power of the sovereign, is the characteristic of this brain that by itself represents the intellectual life of an epoch by multiplying itself in laboratories, manufactories, ethnographical and geographical researches, reports on the European scientific movement, historical and philological investigations, rules of rhetoric and literary forms, odes, tragedies, and other poetical essays. Even yet this marvel of universality has hardly found due appreciation. One of his biographers says: "The works of Lomonossov were rather samples of works than works brought to completion."[1] If we take into con-

book relating to the history of a family which owed its rise to one of its members having become the morganatic husband of the Empress Elizabeth, has been translated into French by A. Brueckner, "Les Razoumovsky." 6 vols.

[1] H. Lubimov, "Life and Works of Lomonossov." Moscow, 1872 (Russian).

sideration the all-comprehensiveness of his intellect, the chaotic state of people's thoughts at that time, and the complete ignorance of an abstract scientific world, we must acknowledge that just the above-mentioned character of Lomonossov's activity determines his merit towards the subsequent development of science in his country. He was the first Russian to whom science was not technical skill but an independent world of knowledge and thought.[1] We will not examine his scientific activity, — it is enough to mention the words of the famous German mathematician Euler, who praised his works in physics and chemistry so highly as to express the wish that "all academies should be able to make discoveries such as those of Mr. Lomonossov," — and we pass over to his literary significance.

"Oratores fiunt, poetae nascuntur," says the ancient proverb: "orators are formed, poets are born." Lomonossov was not born a poet, but he wanted to become one. And such was the power of his will, so fresh seemed that language which he had purified from barbarisms and emancipated from the authority of the ecclesiastical style, that not only did he become poet, but he was acknowledged *the* poet of the time. He gave the tone which Russian poetry kept for the rest of the century: the continuators of Lomonossov will amplify the harmony; they will add no chords to his lyre. The style was altogether the pseudo-classical.[2] As in the

[1] A. N. Pypin, "Lomonossov and his Contemporaries." "European Messenger," April, 1895 (Russian).

[2] "Pseudo-classicism," a term which seems to have been launched by the German critics (perhaps Schlegel), is used in Russia to designate the French literature of the seventeenth century, especially the French tragedy of Corneille, Racine, and their imitators.

allegorical etchings and the medals of the time,[1] gods and goddesses of the Greek mythology further the successes of Russian armies, Boreas blows on the Baltic shores, nymphs bathe in the streams of the Neva, and all this mythological machinery is set in movement to extol the figure of Peter the Great. We cannot deny that a certain power makes itself felt under these borrowed vestments. A quite peculiar greatness emanates from those majestic odes where the descriptions of the aurora borealis, of the sunrise, of a tempest, denote the serenity of a superior spirit accustomed to a scientific enjoyment of God's creation.

We said that Lomonossov wanted to become a poet; this is perhaps not quite so. There was no selfish motive in his poetical attempts, as in general there was none in any of his activities; they all stood at the service of his country. What he wanted was that Russia should have poetry, and therefore he first of all prepares the language. He expels the German words which have been invading the vocabulary since the day of Peter the Great, and when his instrument is ready, he compiles the rules and establishes the laws of versification; and when this work is done, he wants Russia to have poems such as other countries have, and he writes them. This poetry is not a necessity of the soul, it is one of those points of superiority in which foreign countries excel, like science, like industry; and Russia does not intend to be beaten in such a thing as poetry. Had she not come up with other countries with her army and her fleet? Why should poetry stay behind? Is the language not suited for it? Lomo-

[1] On Russian medals of the last century: Ricaud de Tiregal, "Médailles sur les principaux évènements de l'Empire de Russie." Potsdam, 1772.

nossov writes: "Charles V, Emperor of the Romans, used to say that one must talk Spanish to his God, French to his friends, German to his enemies, Italian to ladies. Had he known Russian, he certainly would have added that it can be spoken to all of them; for he would have found in it the splendour of Spanish, the vivacity of French, the strength of German, the tenderness of Italian, and beside all this, the richness and powerful conciseness of Greek and Latin."[1] Should such an instrument resist Lomonossov's rules, or show itself less flexible than the language of Racine and Corneille?

So Russia gets poetry: it is correct, faultless, just what it must be to match the foreign pattern. Soumarokov composes tragedies, Trediakovsky composes everything; but except in some rare instances, this poetry is cold, stiff, official. It becomes—just like its Western model—an appendage of refined life, an ornament of the court; it celebrates victories, accessions to the throne, births of imperial princes. And with all that, in spite of its official pomp, this pseudo-classical poetry is incapable of concealing a sort of self-satisfaction; it seems to say: "You see we are Russians, and yet we also have poetry just like others." And you cannot make out whether that imperceptible smile under the uncomfortable mask is national conceit or cosmopolitan snobbishness. It will take but fifty years more, and in the first years of our century the Russian poet will give up this spirit of competition with foreign literatures; he will sing because he wants to sing, and not because he wants to sing *as well* as others; and instead of saying: "We are Russians, *and yet* we have

[1] In the dedication of his "Russian Grammar" to the Grand Duke Paul. St. Petersburg, 20th September, 1775.

poetry," he will say, "we are Russians, and *therefore* we have *our* poetry." But in those days literature was an imported ornament; it might be compared to the powdered wigs on the heads of the courtiers; it is considered necessary, yet, as Trediakovsky says: "It is necessary like fruit and sweetmeats on a rich table after heavy dishes." Science is not treated much differently. It is like a waiter who has to answer the government's bell — it stands at service. The academy is a big dictionary; the academician — a source of useful information.

Among such conditions, you may yourself appreciate the value of Lomonossov, who for the first time in his discourse on chemistry spoke not of usefulness, but of beauty. He was the first who gathered intellectual joy from scientific study — that real scientific study which despises all reward except the consciousness of its unselfishness. In literature he was the first who considered the Russian language not as a mere vestment for clothing foreign forms, but as an object of study, and a yet unknown but inexhaustible source of independent beauty and power. He predicts that nothing shall be beyond the reach of that language, "For if we do not succeed in expressing things with complete exactness," he says, "it has to be attributed not to our language, but to our lack of skill in using it. He who, led by the universal philosophical conception of human speech, shall penetrate a little deeper, will discover a field of endless breadth or, rather, an almost illimitable sea."[1] On the waves of that illimitable sea the fisherman's son launched the skiff of Russian poetry.

[1] In the dedication of his "Russian Grammar" to the Grand Duke Paul. St. Petersburg, 20th September, 1775.

We have mentioned the two other literary names that illustrate this epoch. Soumarokov (1718–1777) was a tragedian of greater productiveness than talent; his tragedies were Russian history disguised under the mantle of French pseudo-classicism,[1] but he was called by his contemporaries the "Russian Racine,"[2] and he liked to be compared to the great philosopher of Fernay. In one of his critical essays he exclaims: "Is it possible that people should rather trust a clerk than Voltaire or myself!" Trediakovsky (1703–1769) was a versifier of still less talent and still greater productiveness. His verses survive as lasting examples of poetical poverty.[3] But his works on versification had their importance. In those days of foreign influence he was the first to look for suggestions in the metre of popular songs.

These were the three men who had to carry out the ungrateful task of providing for the literary education of that light-minded and superficial society which composed the court of Empress Elizabeth. A strange degeneration is presented by the forms under which foreign influence showed itself at this time. Perhaps the succession of several women on the throne furthered the relaxation

[1] "Théâtre tragique d'A. Soumarokov," translated by M. Pappadopoulo. 2 vols. Paris, 1801. "Demetrius the Impostor," tragedy. London, 1806.

[2] "Posterity thinks differently.... No more incense is being burnt before the idol, yet let us not touch the marble pedestal; let us preserve in its integrity the inscription: 'Great Soumarokov.'... We may set up new statues if necessary, but let us not destroy those erected by the noble zeal of our forefathers." Karamsin, "Pantheon of Russian Writers." 1802 (Russian).

[3] "Could good will and assiduity take the place of talent, whom would not Trediakovsky have surpassed in versification and eloquence?" *Ibid.*

of the energy which had been imparted to life under the impulsion of Peter the Great. Dutch wharves and manufactories had been the school of the reformer's generation; under his daughter it is French drawing-rooms, barber-shops, and restaurants. What would her father have said to this, he who, when asked by two German princesses — the Electress of Hannover and the Electress of Brandenburg — what was his favourite occupation, — for answer showed his callous hands? Now French influence was smoothing away on the hands of posterity the inheritance of their fathers' Dutch callosities. It made them refined, fond of theatricals; military schools became like academies of dancing; cadets performed at court; the empress herself presided over all details. In the tittle-tattle of that spruce country, literary interests had but little place, and French influence came in chiefly by the channel of frivolity and indolence. Only a few received it by the channel of thought. Among these was the wife of the heir to the throne, the young Grand Duchess Catherine. "If I have any notion of anything," she writes to Voltaire a few years later, "I owe it to you."[1] The circumstances of her accession are well known.

Empress Elizabeth died in 1761,[2] while the Russian army, taking part in the Seven Years' War, was pressing upon the king of Prussia, after having entered Berlin. Thanks to her death the coalition of the "three petticoats" — as Frederick the Great used to call Empress Elizabeth, Empress Maria Theresa, and the Marquise de Pompadour — comes to an end. The Duke of Hol-

[1] A. Brueckner, "Catharina II." Berlin, 1888.

[2] On the Empress Elizabeth: Vandal, "Louis XV et Elisabeth." Paris, 1882.

stein, Emperor Peter III, succeeds his aunt. He had always worshipped Frederick the Great, and the army is recalled.[1] The new emperor was hated. His brutality, his cynicism, his arrogance, his contempt for all that was Russian, his ostentatious preference of his Holstein officers, and above all, his predilection for all that was German and Prussian, — contributed only too much to bring into light the charms of the empress. The young but prudent Princess of Anhalt Zerbst had prepared her way slowly, but with a remarkable perseverance. "I have always considered it better," she writes, "to possess the hearts of all than the hearts of a few. To this deliberate conduct I owe my having attained the height on which I have been looked up to by all Europe." And, indeed, she possessed all hearts. Independently of any political consideration, the insulting behaviour of the emperor towards his wife caused everybody to be on her side. When her personal security became compromised by the uncertainty of the position to which the extravagances of Peter had brought her as well as himself, all who held power became her allies. The crisis had come. "I had either to perish with a fool," she wrote some years later, "or to save myself with the multitude which meant to deliver itself from him."[2]

On the 28th of June, Catherine was proclaimed empress regent; on the next day Peter was arrested. Frederick the Great used to say in speaking of his worshipper, that he left the throne as an obedient child leaves the

[1] On the Seven Years' War: Frédéric le Grand, "Œuvres posthumes." Amsterdam, 1789. "Histoire de mon temps," in "Publicationen aus den Preussischen Staatsarchiven." Berlin, 1876, vol. iv. Ranke, "Der Ursprung des Siebenjährigen Krieges." 1871.

[2] A. Brueckner, op. cit.

room when sent to bed. On the 6th of July, Peter III went to sleep forever.[1] When the Empress, upset by the terrible news, announced it to her friend the Princess Dashkoff,[2] that future president of the Academy of Sciences exclaimed: "Too soon for your glory and for mine!" Till to-day posterity is uncertain as to how far the glory of Catherine should be clouded by the opportuneness of Peter's death.[3]

The personality of Catherine the Great appears double: the empress as she was, and the empress as she wanted to be seen. No monarch ever cared for contemporary opinion as much as she did. All the

[1] Eleven years later a Cossack, Pougachoff, assumed the name of Peter III. In a few months' time he raised the whole southeast of the country. With great difficulty his army was overcome by General Michelson, the impostor was made prisoner by Souvorov, and executed in Moscow in 1774. ("The History of Pougachoff's Rebellion," by Poushkin. Translations—see Lecture VI, foot-notes.) On Peter III: "Die merkwürdige Lebensgeschichte Peters des Dritten." Leipzig, 1733. A. Brueckner, "Zur Geschichte Peter III und Catharina II" in "Russische Revue," XI.

[2] "Mon histoire." Archives of the Prince Worontsoff, vol. xxi. Moscow, 1881. "Memoirs of Princess Dashkaw." London, 1859.

[3] See A. Brueckner, "Catharina II." Berlin, 1888. Schloezer, "Friedrich der Grosse und Catharina II." Berlin, 1859. Arneth, "Joseph II nnd Catharina von Russland." Vienna, 1869. Jouffret, "Catherine II et son règne." 2 vols. Paris, 1860. Valiszevsky (from the French), "The Romance of an Empress." London, 1894. "The Story of a Throne." 2 vols. London, 1895. Bilbassov, "Geschichte Catharinas." Berlin, 2 B. 1891–1893. De Larivière, "Catherine II et la révolution française." Paris, 1895. Kobeko, "Léfance d'un Tsar," translated by D. de Benckendorff. Paris, 1896.

Contemporary: Catherine II, "Mémoires." London, 1859. Castera, "Histoire de Catherine II." 3 vols. 1798 (superficial). Count de Ségur, "Mémoires ou Souvenirs et Anecdotes." 3 vols. Paris, 1827. Prince de Ligne, "Œuvres," 4 vols., and "Mémoires." Brussels, 1860. J. Harris, "Diaries and Correspondence of J. Harris, first lord Malmesbury." London, 1844.

resources of her intelligence, her literary talent, the means given by rank and power, were employed by her for establishing the reputation she wanted to prevail. Her correspondence with Voltaire, Diderot, D'Alembert, Grimm, Mme. Geoffrin, and all the celebrities of contemporary France, which displays more brightness and good humour than seriousness, was nothing but hunting for notoriety. As in our days cheap chromolithographers spread the features of a sovereign all over his kingdom, so in these spirited letters she was multiplying and spreading her moral portrait all over Europe. And, of course, the portrait was pleasant. In the gorgeous frame of monarchical splendour, with beautiful parks and palaces in the purest Louis XV style in the background, surrounded with the fame of military exploits, the features of this most attractive, bright, and amiable woman roused enthusiasm. They were praised abroad, they were exalted at home; they were celebrated in beautiful verses, and as such they were handed down to posterity. The brightness of that portrait throws its light on the whole environment, and communicates to this reign an exterior splendour which has seldom been surpassed. The empress had the rare fortune of impressing herself on people's minds just as she wanted to be seen. Perhaps the judgment of posterity will find less charm in the portrait of her who cared so much for the opinion of contemporaries; those who study the conditions of the country and go to the root of things have to admit many deficiencies under that dazzling splendour.[1]

[1] Poushkin was perhaps the first to show the reverse of the medal. In a historical essay written in Kishinioff, 1822, the great poet reveals a sense of historical criticism which is all the more remarkable as only twenty-six years separate his writing from Catherine's death.

But in our case it is the empress as she wanted to be seen who interests us, for it is she who influenced the intellectual movement, she who patronized literature, she who impressed imaginations, she who passed into poetry. By following her in her relations to philosophy and literature, let us try to trace the intellectual picture of the time.[1]

Under Catherine French philosophy pervades Russian intellectual life. We have seen that in the preceding generation French philosophers had their readers, and French poets their imitators, but the taste was not universal, — it grew to a passion now. In this, Russia underwent the same influence as the rest of Europe in those days. Frederick the Great welcomed Voltaire to Potsdam, the Academy of Berlin was presided over by Maupertuis; Catherine received Diderot at St. Petersburg, entertained Grimm at Tsarskoye Selo. Perhaps in Russia the movement was more exaggerated than elsewhere. Russian military schools swarmed with French professors, rich families kept French teachers for their children,[2] — the Empress had given the example, she had asked D'Alembert to take charge of her son's education; the philosopher declined the offer, but later her eldest grandsons, Alexander and Constantine, were entrusted to the Swiss Laharpe, a fervent disciple of French ideas.[3] A touching intercourse established itself between St. Petersburg and Paris; no Russian went

[1] A writer calls the Empress Catherine a "microscope of her time." Mordovtsev, "Russian Women." 3 vols. St. Petersburg, 1874 (Russian).

[2] Among these was the brother of Marat. He did not share the revolutionary opinions of his illustrious brother, and even asked to have his name changed. He was called after his birthplace — Baudry.

[3] His "Mémoires." Paris and Geneva, 1864.

abroad without paying his tribute of personal respect to Voltaire.[1]

A strange, I should say a sad, moral aspect that society presents which, eager for real mental aliment, threw itself upon the negative philosophy of the last century. Transplanted from the historical soil which determined their development, deprived of their practical union with the conditions of life, those bombastic sentences on liberty, fraternity, equality, stuff the Russian brains of that time with shallow phrases. The inner link between the ideas proclaimed, and those events of the French history which gradually led to the great revolution, escapes their observation. The Empress herself in the beginning does not understand; she continues her philosophical flirtations with the men who are the intellectual representatives of an epoch the mere remembrance of which shall later make her shudder. That shortsightedness as to the link between ideas and events is the more striking because in her appreciation of events, she had a remarkably keen perception of cause and effect. In politics she is extraordinarily far-

[1] The old philosopher was not inaccessible to these marks of devotion from the side of the "Scythians." Under the Empress Elizabeth he solicited and obtained election as honorary member of the Academy of St. Petersburg, — later, the official appointment to write the history of Peter the Great. Lomonossov helped him with documents and translations, yet he remained sceptical as to the success of the enterprise. Frederic the Great felt very much irritated at the appearance of the first volume. "Pray, what is this idea of writing the history of Siberian wolves and bears?" he writes to the philosopher. And the latter in quoting the king's words in a letter to D'Alembert, adds: "Yet when they entered Berlin, they proved to be very well educated bears." (S. Solovieff, "History of Russia," vol. xxvi.) The books and manuscripts left after Voltaire's death were bought by the Empress Catherine (1778). The "Voltaire Library" forms now a department of the Imperial Public Library at St. Petersburg.

sighted; she almost anticipates the events of French history. In the autumn of 1789, she says that Louis XVI will have the end of Charles I. In her letters to Grimm as early as 1790, she predicts the apparition of a Cæsar in France.[1] But these were politics, and politics, in her opinion, seems to have nothing to do with that which was considered *pure* philosophy. A sort of duality creates a contradiction between her ideas and her acts, but it does not seem to trouble her. The American Revolutionary War fills her with indignation, and yet she is sincerely disappointed when General Lafayette, detained with the Assembly of the Notables, declines her invitation to accompany her in her journey through the Crimea. On the other hand, Franklin expresses the wish to pay her a visit, and she asks Grimm to dissuade the old man from the long journey. In the interesting diary of her private secretary Krapovitsky, who during ten years (1782–1793) kept a concise record of his conversations with the Empress, we read under the date of the 6th of June, 1782, the following sentence in French: "I don't like him," and in parenthesis, "portrait of Franklin."

Those sovereigns of the end of the eighteenth century who were representatives of the so-called "enlightened absolutism," like Frederick II, Joseph II, Catherine II, must have experienced strange bifurcations of professed principles and inborn ideas. Jostled between love of popularity and dread of revolution, they were all double-faced at that time.[2] No wonder that the empress "as she

[1] The letters of the Empress Catherine to Grimm (French text), published by the Imperial Russian Historical Society, vol. xxiii; the letters of Grimm to the Empress, vol. xxxiii of the same publication.

[2] It is rather amusing that in Catherine's letters to Grimm, Joseph II

wanted to be seen" invites Beaumarchais to bring over to St. Petersburg his "Figaro's Marriage," which had just been interdicted in Paris, while the Empress "as she was" falls ill and goes to bed when she learns that the King of France has been executed.

And society, too, was double-faced at that time. Those refined courtiers, who knew by heart Voltaire and Rousseau, not only did not suffer from, but seemed not to notice the contradiction between books and life, — the great principles proclaiming the "rights of man" on one side, and the servitude of the peasants on the other. Of course, dreams of equality will always remain dreams; law may proclaim all emancipations possible, — life will always paralyze their full application; yet they have their importance as idealistic postulates forcing our conscience to acknowledge the wrong in the actual state of things. This translation of idea into action was almost unknown in these times we are speaking of. The Empress, who in many respects stood above her environment, had made during the first years of her reign several attempts at putting the question of the emancipation of the serfs on a firm footing, — she had to give it up: she had to spare the interests of those to whom she owed her accession to the throne.

Thus, as we have said, French philosophy was entering into Russian minds deprived of inner links with actuality; but its links with the past escaped comprehension as well. That this philosophy and this literature were representatives of a whole civilization, that they were the contemporary stratum of a long historical formation, that they were a result of the past and not merely

(before his first visit to Russia) is spoken of under the nickname "l'homme aux deux physionomies."

a specimen of the present, — that had not been grasped by our fathers. Their culture, very considerable in the quantitative sense, was superficial both in a contemporary and in a historical sense. They took what is known in German æsthetic as the "scheinbare Oberfläche," — the visible surface of contemporary culture, — and abstract as it was, it made them abstract and unfitted to the soil; philosophy amalgamated with brains, not with life. Only much later, after the terrors of the Revolution, and perhaps still more after the invasion of Napoleon I in 1812, French philosophy was made responsible for historical events, and, as it often happens in similar cases, things were exaggerated: those who professed French ideas were regarded as sympathizers with revolution. Throughout the whole first part of the present century "Voltairianism" was synonymous with apostasy; a "Voltairianist" was a man condemned to hell, whom good Christians must avoid. Yet they were not dangerous; indeed, they were survivors of a past which had become innocuous, and soon fell out of fashion. But their memory lived on, and the younger generation was already frisking in the prairies of romanticism, when old ladies in the provinces were still crossing themselves at the mere name of Voltaire.

Let us now pass on to literature. The poets of the Catherinian time appear old-fashioned in our days, but in the succession of literary periods they have their historical importance, and taken in their own contemporary atmosphere, they certainly present a brilliant appearance, well deserving the fame with which their names were surrounded at the splendid court of the enlightened Empress. No sovereign, before or since Catherine the Great, took more interest in literature

and writers than she did;[1] she was a writer herself. In a time when literary work did not constitute an independent career this special attention granted to literature is of important significance; it had its influence and consequences.

We have seen that Lomonossov had constituted himself the singer of Peter the Great. With the pseudo-classical tone of his lyre this official character of poetry passes over to the next generation. The Empress, with her encouraging smile, captivates the heart of the national muse, and becomes not only the centre of poets, but the chief object of their songs. Derjavine, the most brilliant among them, declares in one of his odes to have no other ambition than to become illustrious through having celebrated her deeds.

> "I sang, I sing, and I will sing them.
> A sun, a moon, for coming ages,
> Thy glorious image, and thy name.
> I will extol; I will exalt thee;
> And through thee become immortal."

A sort of fellowship establishes itself between the Empress and the writers. In her comedies she herself gives the example of the satirical tone. A number of satirical magazines arise; Von Wiezin writes his famous comedies; plays by the Empress and others are performed on the private stage of the Hermitage palace — a frank and healthy laughter resounds at the court of her who used to say that no great man ever lived who did not possess an inexhaustible supply of gaiety.[2]

[1] A. N. Pypin, "The Times of Catherine II." "European Messenger," May, June, July, 1895 (Russian).

[2] A. Brueckner, "Catharina II."

Thus the two tendencies of the literature of the time are marked by the Empress herself: the pseudo-classical trumpet proclaiming her glory, and the caustic speech of sarcasm ridiculing the old generation, and spurring on the young.

Derjavine (1743–1816), as we have said, is the most brilliant among the first group. Less emphatical than Lomonossov, he himself establishes his points of excellence when he says that he was the first who sang in a pleasing tone, who spoke of God in simplicity of heart, and told truth to monarchs "smilingly." If we compare him with his predecessors, this self-appreciation is very nearly adequate. He, in fact, condescended to leave those artificial heights where poetry had sought its vocabulary; he dwells in a lower region than Lomonossov, yet, compared to the next generation, he is still in the clouds. It is not his fault, it is not the fault of literature; all streams of intellectual life moved in unnatural channels, intelligences walked on stilts, and were actuated by the desire of living up to patterns, not of penetrating into the substance of questions; a void separated intellectual interests from the interests of life. Derjavine made attempts at stepping over that vacuum; he introduced into his solemn verse satirical strokes of everyday life. In a letter to the Princess Dashkoff, president of the Academy of Sciences, drawing a parallel between Lomonossov and himself, he thus establishes the difference between them: "He had recourse to magnificent tales, and to accessory ornamentation, whereas I have recourse to nature alone, and to truth, which history will confirm." And, indeed, in his ode "Felitsa," where the Empress is celebrated under the fictitious name of a

Kirguise princess, he opposes to her virtues his own shortcomings. Under the autobiographical mask we must look for the aspect of contemporary society; its luxury, its indolence, its roughness, are represented with characteristic strokes, but they do not fill up the void we spoke of; without communicating reality to his poetry they simply remain specimens of bad taste. Yet they have their historical importance. A critic says that Derjavine's poems are "poetical annals" of Catherine's reign.[1] In one of the last works which old Soumarokov, a survivor of the Elizabethan time, offered to Catherine, he says: "The reign of an Augustus needs its Horace." But Soumarokov did not become the Horace of Catherine;[2] he was supplanted by another. Derjavine, whose sonorous language, animated with a real practical breath, was just the instrument suited for the splendour of that court, for the glory of the victories in the Crimea and on the Danube, for the pomp of that society, the pride of the grandees, and the fantastic military exploits of Souvorov, Potiomkin, Roumiantsov, and all those others who formed what Poushkin called "the glorious brood of Catherinian eagles."[3]

If we abstract from Derjavine's work the special

[1] A. Galakov, "History of Russian Literature." 2 vols. Moscow, 1894 (Russian).

[2] P. Polevoy, "History of Russian Literature." 5th ed. St. Petersburg, 1883 (Russian).

[3] On campaigns and exterior politics of the time: A. Brueckner, "Russlands Politic im Mittelmeer, 1788 und 1789," in the "Hist. Zeitschrift," xxvi. "Schweden und Russland," in "Hist. Zeitschrift," xxii. "Dänmarks Neutralität im Schwedisch-Russischen Kriege im Jahre 1788," in the "Baltische Monatsschrift." Neue Folge, II. Carl Bergholm, "Die Bewaffnete Neutralität." Berlin, 1884.

merits of contemporaneousness, and the defects of old-fashionedness, we shall discover elements of real poetical beauty which have their lasting value in art. His lyrical poems have genuine sentiment; his ode entitled "God" is a fine specimen of solemn poetry.[1] In the main, he was our first *poet;* for Lomonossov, even in his best verse, remains a splendid orator. In Lomonossov the poet is overweighed by the scientist; Derjavine is nothing but poet.[2] His keeping closer to life, though it did not always produce happy results from the æsthetical point of view, is nevertheless important in the historical development of our literature. In the pseudo-classical temple those specimens of bad taste to which we have referred were bold innovations which opened the doors to torrents of real life.[3]

Another element which still more undermined the authority of the pseudo-classical sanctuary was the satirical movement of the time. With Kantemir, satirical literature became an ally of the new ideas, and the Empress Catherine availed herself of this powerful means of educating and directing public opinion.

In the private imperial theatre of the Hermitage palace in St. Petersburg,[4] performances, perhaps unique in history, were taking place. On the stage the measures of the government, and innovations in social life,

[1] It has been translated into German, French, English, Italian, Spanish, Polish, Tschech, Latin, and Japanese. (Fifteen French translations.)

[2] Belinsky, Works, vol. viii.

[3] "Derjavine's poetry," says Belinsky, "is a brilliant page of the *history* of Russian poetry; it is not yet poetry." Works, vol. vii.

[4] The beautiful picture gallery of the Hermitage palace was started by Catherine the Great. The reproduction of Raphael's loggia of the Vatican was executed at her order. Goethe, while in Rome, saw the copies of the frescoes being made. ("Italienische Reise." 3d of September, 1787.)

were criticised and abused by old ladies deploring "the good old time," by obscurantist adherents of the past, by idle youths who would neither learn nor serve; and in the hall, on the picturesque amphitheatre of marble seats, the brilliant court surrounding the Empress was exulting and applauding. An old lady on the stage is exasperated at these new plays where people are portrayed and made fun of. "But why are such kind of plays permitted?" exclaims her interlocutor. "Why, my dear man," bursts out the old lady, "what if those themselves who ought to be interested in forbidding them exult more than anyone else!" The Empress, indeed, exulted "more than anyone else," for she was not only spectator — she was the author.

Portraits, in fact, were presented, but they were raised to types, and became portraits of customs, not of people; they belonged to literature, sometimes to politics,[1] not to gossip. And they were sharply drawn, for Catherine had a good equipment of observation and knowledge of human nature. Few sovereigns knew their surrounding as she did. In that crowd of ministers, diplomatists, writers, scientists, which composed her court, she knew every single character. When in her letters she happens to mention some of them, her few strokes are always to the point; she knows the qualities and weaknesses of everyone. Fond of men of talents, she lifted them out of the multitude, she helped their individualization, and the imperial benevolence imposed them upon society. At her court, however numerous the crowd, she recognizes in each his moral physiognomy, his intellectual rank, and gives to

[1] See A. Brueckner, "Eine komische Oper aus dem Jahre 1788," in "Baltische Monatsschrift." 1867.

each his nickname. They have all been divined, studied, and labelled by the Empress; she has a different way of talking, a different selection of wits, according to her interlocutor.[1] Her brightness, her versatility, the extent of her knowledge, the inexhaustibleness of gayety she possessed and infused into others, can hardly be conceived even from her own letters.[2] "When I used to part from the Empress," says Grimm, "I often felt so electrified that for half the night I used to walk up and down in my room."[3]

These qualities, added to a wonderful mastery of the Russian language, could not but communicate a great value to Catherine's writings.[4] They had still another importance. "Her comedies," says a critic, "are a brilliant tribute paid to the authority of thought and to the moral sovereignty of literature."[5] There was an outburst of periodicals in St. Petersburg and Moscow. This kind of publication was not new; Soumarokov, under Empress Elizabeth, had founded the first Russian periodical in 1759. "The Busy Bee" lasted one year, yet it called forth a number of imitations. In the one year, 1769, seven new publications appear, always in the satirical tone. The campaign they led was directed

[1] Particulars on Catherine's court: Hardt, "Mémoires d'un gentilhomme Suédois." Berlin, 1788.

[2] On Catherine's character: A. Brueckner, "Zur Characteristic der Kaiserin Catharina," in "Russische Revue," v.

[3] A. Brueckner, "Catharina II."

[4] Catherine left fourteen comedies, nine operas (text), seven proverbs (short plays), and other writings not in dramatic form. (French translations: "O temps, O mœurs!" Comédie, trad. par Leclerc. Paris, 1826. "Le Czarévitz Chlore, conte moral." Berlin, 1782.)

[5] Prince Viazemsky, "Von Wiezin." (Works. 9 vols. St. Petersburg, 1878–1884.)

on the old subject: resistance to or misunderstanding of the reform, obscurantism or superficial dandyism; but new subjects also were introduced: the pre-eminence of the foreign element in the upper classes, the insufficient interest in that which is purely Russian, provincial bribery, domestic despotism. The latter furnished the subject of a play which is like the foundation-stone of the Russian comedy.

"The Under-aged," by Von Wiezin (1745–1792), is an interesting monument in our literary evolution, marking a rapid step on the way of emancipation from the tyranny of pseudo-classical forms. The comedies which preceded Von Wiezin presented pictures of would-be Russian life set in French frames—an attempt which proved most ridiculous in its results. Boileau says that Ronsard was "talking" Greek and Latin in French. In our first comedies, even in those of Soumarokov, people were "living" French in Russian. The well-known names of Alceste, Oronte, consecrated by Molière, illustrate the play-bills; sometimes they alternate with Russian names, but no Russian element enters into the characters or the plot where housemaids and valets are the indispensable spring, and the marriage agreement the inevitable solution.

Von Wiezin, in his comedy, breaks the chains of this imposed tradition; adherence to the old pattern makes itself felt, indeed, in that sort of symmetrical disposition of the characters by which each vice has its counterpart of virtue; also in the abuse of sermonizing and theorizing; but the personages, the interests, are all genuinely national. The plot is the eternal story of two lovers—obstacles and a marriage. The obstacle, in this case, is a despotic mother who wants the girl for her son,

a grown-up minor, illiterate, ignorant; trained in the principles of his parent, who wonders "what's the use of learning geography? A cab takes one anywhere nowadays!" The two figures — that of the mother and that of the son — are the best in the play. The others are either too highly caricatured in their defects or too fastidious in their virtue. The obstacles are overcome and the marriage arranged, thanks to the girl's uncle, — a rich proprietor of gold mines in Siberia, — the "American uncle" of the modern French comedy. He is the preacher of the play; his endless sermonizings on honour and virtue interrupt the action and make it very heavy to the listener. Our best critic, Belinsky, considers "The Under-aged" not so much a comedy as a satire endeavouring to become a comedy.[1] This definition makes clear its defects: not enough action, and too much preaching. And yet so much real comicalness and unborrowed life are contained in the play that, although written 113 years ago, it carries us away even nowadays. The scene in the first act, where the mother scolds the tailor for having cut for her son a coat that does not fit, is in the highest degree amusing. The success of "The Under-aged" was immense. The author was covered with praise. "Die or write no more!" exclaimed, after the first performance, Prince Potiomkin, the all-powerful favourite of the Empress at that time.[2] Von Wiezin followed the second part of the advice; he wrote no more plays. "The Under-aged" has passed into the national consciousness; several proper names of its personages have become familiar

[1] Works, vol. viii.

[2] See A. Brueckner, "Potiomkins Glück und Ende," in "Baltische Monatsschrift." Neue Folge, i.

appellations; many sentences have become proverbial.

Such are the chief specimens of the literature of the eighteenth century. So far as brevity has allowed us we have tried to demonstrate that its character stood in harmony with the character of the whole intellectual culture of the time: like philosophy, like learning, like social customs, literature, a hundred years ago, was annexed to life, not incorporated with it. Yet that eighteenth century, so strangely picturesque in its combination of refinement and roughness, so pretentious in its self-content, so touching in its attempts of self-education, so sad in its practical insolvency,—that eighteenth century which speedily will seem hardly less remote than the seventeenth,—that eighteenth century deserves gratitude from posterity. Under Peter the Great, culture was forced upon the country; under Catherine the Great, it was being adapted to the country. It had now to be assimilated.

One day, in 1815, in the Lyceum,—the high school annexed to the suburban palace of Tsarskoye Selo,—great excitement reigned among the pupils: old Derjavine was coming to assist at the examination. He came, the venerable poet—white-haired, bent under his seventy-two years. He nearly slept from weakness until the examination in Russian literature began; then he awoke. The pupils were speaking of him,—declaiming his poems,—his eyes became bright, his face was illuminated, he was transfigured. A youth steps forth: his hair curls like that of a negro, his lips are thick, his eyes are living coal; there is something African in his face. He is introduced as a young poet. He is asked to recite some of his verses.

"I told my reminiscences," he writes later, "standing at two paces' distance from Derjavine. I cannot describe the state of my soul when I came to the verse where I mention Derjavine's name. My boyish voice resounded, my heart was beating in wild ecstasy, I do not remember how I finished, where I fled to. Derjavine was transported; he asked for me, he called for me, he wanted to embrace me. They looked for me; they did not find me."

"My time has come to an end," said Derjavine, a few days later; "another Derjavine shall reveal himself to the world, one who on the school-bench has surpassed all other poets."

Under such an omen life was entered by Poushkin.

LECTURE VI

(1779–1837)

Suddenness and many-sidedness of intellectual growth in the nineteenth century. New literary currents traced back into the eighteenth century: Novikov and the Moscovian circle. Europe's literary horizon at the opening of the century.

Sentimentalism in Russia. Karamsin. "Letters of a Russian tourist." "Poor Lizzie" and the sentimental novel. The "History of the Russian State." Romanticism, — Joukovsky. A new sense in poetry.

Poushkin. His literary career. His poetry, — character of its beauty, æsthetical excellence and ethical height. His subject — life. Russian society in the first decades of the century. "Eugene Onegui ," — the novel, character of its charm. Poushkin's lyrical poetry, — its chief features, many-sidedness, harmony. His language. Nationalism and universality.

LECTURE VI

(1779–1837)

The birth of a poet is the principal event in chronology.—EMERSON.

IN our introductory lecture we said that it was a hard task to put ten centuries of history into eight hours' time.

> "Turning the accomplishment of many years
> Into an hour-glass,"

as Shakespeare says. It is, perhaps, still harder to put in the remaining three lectures the ninety-five years of the present century. The rapidity, the extent, and the progressive concentration of the intellectual activity have been such that, if we take the present state of the Russian mind, laden with all that has been accomplished during this century, and if we turn our looks backward to the eighteenth, we are amazed at the disproportion between the final and the starting-point. Our modern critical spirit, trained on the basis of evolution with its methods of gradual progress, stands perplexed at the suddenness of this growth. Who has not experienced that upsetting sort of surprise which we feel on seeing a child after an interval of several years? The same kind of surprise does the critic feel when comparing the different periods of Russia's literary

development. The pulsations of Russian life in the middle of this century were more rapid than at any time of her history; compared to the preceding century Russia seems almost another state. We lose our way in the multiplicity of the currents we have to trace back to their source. The ramification of the genealogical threads is such that it seems impossible to reduce them to those few elements from which they took their genesis. Without underrating the value of the preceding century, to which we paid our tribute of homage in the last lecture, we cannot help wondering at the disproportion of the succession. However great the efforts of the eighteenth century may have been, the results offered by the nineteenth make this latter appear like a mountain born of a mouse. In our attempt at investigating the growth and development of Russian thought from the Catherinian epoch on, we shall have to proceed with a different method than the one used hitherto.

We had been led through the preceding centuries by the thread of events; the material history was like the spine round which the facts of intellectual and literary life grouped themselves. The sovereigns of Moscow were the central points marking the succession of historical periods; the history of Russia was confined to the official history of Moscow. Under Peter the Great it became still more so; we might say that the Emperor's biography is the country's history. In the reign of Catherine we abandoned the thread of events, we regarded the mere intellectual side; yet though neglecting facts of official history, we did not get out of the official circles of society. The Empress, the court, St. Petersburg, embody the intellectual life of the epoch. Russia's culture at that time — with the exception of a

small circle which groups itself round the University of Moscow, and of which we will speak later, is confined to the Winter Palace, and, as an annex to it, the Academy of Science. With the first years of the present century things change. A scientific and literary stream makes irruption into the life of the nation. An independent body of writers, poets, and scientists, by the power of their work and the authority of talent, regulate the tendencies and establish the direction of Russian thought. The official circles, which till then had been the only workers of culture, now get such allies that they lose the exclusive importance they had in the preceding century. For a hundred years they had been sowing; now the seeds began to germinate; the imported elements absorbed by the earth reappear on the surface regenerated, and, with a rapidity and exuberance of growth which only virgin soils can produce, gave an offspring of intellectual activity which probably will never be surpassed in our country. If you consider that over two hundred years separate the German translation of the Bible by Luther from Goethe, and that only fifty years separate the Russian Grammar by Lomonossov from Poushkin,[1] and less than a hundred years lie between Lomonossov and Leo Tolstoi, you will get an idea of the enforced pace by which Russian thought was advancing. To follow up this growth, we shall have to abandon the official history; we should have no time for both. If in the preceding lectures literature has appeared as an appendix to events, henceforth it will become the central point of our studies, and official history and court circles will be considered by

[1] As to their philological and literary significance these moments are equivalent.

us only so far as they influenced or were reflected by our writers.

With Derjavine the official character of our literature disappears. He was the last representative of that imposed poetry which was the result of imported culture. Strange to say, not only will the style of the eighteenth century reappear no more, but it will have scarcely any influence on the later literary growth. With the exception of a few examples offered by Poushkin's earliest poems — where it appears more as a tribute to authority than an ingredient of poetry, more as a debt of homage than an inborn taste — pseudo-classicism dies childless. None of the subsequent literary streams, if traced back, can be attached to Derjavine; they come from quite a different source. If we follow up the intellectual currents of the present century, we shall be led, not to the court of the Empress Catherine, not even to St. Petersburg, but to the University of Moscow; to the famous "Friendly Scientific Society," which called forth so many enlightened workers in literature, and the centre of which was the noble figure of Novikov. This man, who devoted his life, his untiring energy, his whole fortune to works of education and to the diffusion of knowledge, exercised the most important influence on the direction of the intellectual and literary forces of the time.

In 1779, he was intrusted with the direction of the University Press in Moscow. During the first three years of his direction more books were published than during the preceding twenty-four years. The best intellectual forces group themselves round him; the "Friendly Society" becomes an enthusiastic promoter of learning, writing, travelling, translating, publishing.

A number of printing offices spring up under Novikov's patronage; the best periodicals of the Catherinian epoch, the "Historical Dictionary of Russian Writers,"[1] the beautiful collection of historical documents which form the thirty-one volumes of the "Ancient Russian Bibliotheca," are but single specimens of the wonderful activity displayed by this man, who spared nothing for collecting materials and spreading publications. In a time when official position and court honours were the only source of authority, Novikov had become a power without availing himself of either. He was a precursory, individual specimen of the social forces which, yet slumbering, were about to break out independently of the official circles of the court.[2] The poet Heraskov (1733–1807),[3] superintendent of the Moscow University, became his zealous helper; the high school, founded by him as an annex to the University, was the best educational establishment of the time. A few names will suffice to show the literary importance of Novikov's

[1] With this book actually begins the science of Russian literature. A. N. Pypin, "Questions of Literary History," "European Messenger," October, 1893 (Russian).

[2] Unfortunately he had been involved in masonic affairs and secret societies, which in the last years of Catherine's reign excited the suspicion of the government, alarmed at the successes of the French Revolution. Envy and calumny worked his undoing. In 1782 he was arrested, accused of keeping up connections with foreign revolutionists, and incarcerated. It is a dark page among the brilliant pages of the Empress's annals. One of the first acts of the Emperor Paul I, at his accession, was to release him. He was one of the finest figures of Catherine's reign.

[3] Of no talent, he nevertheless enjoyed a great reputation in his time. His "Rossiade" and "Vladimir," epics in the pseudo-classical style, gained him the bombastic surname of the "Russian Homer." He was the last representative of the old school, which in poetry cared less for inspiration than for observance of "rules."

circle and the influence it exercised. The historian Karamsin, the poet Joukovsky, who says himself that his family was the stock of a "literary dynasty"; Tourgenieff, president of the Moscow University, of the same family as the great novelist; his sons, students of the Göttingen University, who played a prominent part in the first half of the century, were all either members of the "Friendly Society" or trained in its traditions. All that was prominent in literature during the next forty years stood in connection with this Moscovian circle; the teachers of the lyceum annexed to the suburban palace of Tsarskoye Selo near St. Petersburg, in 1811, all came from Moscow. Among the brilliant names which compose the first set of its students, the name of Poushkin is the most brilliant;[1] he had been placed in the lyceum by the above-mentioned Tourgenieff.

Poushkin's first poem appeared in 1818, two years after Derjavine's death. I do not think any European literature offers a similar suddenness of growth. It is not that we underrate the educational influence the eighteenth century had on Russia's literary development, and on the formation of the language; but you have seen yourself how imitative those writers were, how little genuine their poetry was, — it seems provoked by outside stimulants, not by inner inspirations; it was adopted, it was not our own. Had we no other specimens of poetry from that time to this, we should not be able to tell what Russian poetry is capable of; for all that was produced by the eighteenth century was not real Russian poetry; it had not yet touched the national soil; it did so first with

[1] The most prominent among Poushkin's comrades were the poet Delvig and Prince Gorchakoff, the future chancellor.

Poushkin; and that by which the Russian literature so wonderfully differs from others is the fact that the moment it touched the soil, the moment poetry became genuine, it became sublime, unsurpassable, at least, unsurpassed as yet. We do not mean to say that since Poushkin Russian literature has declined, but we certainly must acknowledge that Russian poetry started with its culminating point.

Before we pass to this great poet, we must speak of the two men who created the literary atmosphere of the first years of the century. They are the historian Karamsin and the poet Joukovsky.

You remember Europe's literary horizon at the beginning of the century: — the great revolution had thundered away, the streams of blood had dried up, the clouds of smoke had been dispersed, a pacifying sunshine seemed to promise invariably fine weather. The other nations, terrified by the revolutionary tempest in France, enjoyed the consciousness of having escaped the storm: nothing troubled the serenity of the sky; Bonaparte had not yet become Napoleon, he was not yet the conqueror, — he was the tamer, the appeaser. The century opened like a radiant summer. A new literary breeze caressed the languorous hearts; they abandoned themselves to its charm. Old pseudo-classical trumpets and wigs — attributes of decapitated royalty — are relegated to the past; literature will have no attributes, no attire, no borrowed garments; henceforth — naked truth, simplicity, sincerity, nature — nothing but nature shall have the power of touching people's hearts. And the sentimental novel has immense vogue.[1]

[1] In fact, the sentimental novel had appeared much earlier: "Clarissa" by Richardson, in 1748; the "Sentimental Journey," by Sterne, in 1768;

Richardson and his innumerable imitators are in all hands; tears of compassion moisten the eyes. But there is no bitterness in those tears; the great poetical sufferers of the century had not yet made their appearance, and those tears, though abundant, were sweet. The new literature had such tender ways, was so sparing; it wounded so profoundly, yet did not hurt.

Yet in spite of its overdone sentimentalism, the first romantic breeze had its importance: it helped literature to find the way towards human hearts, it prepared the latter for the acceptance of real poetry. Soon they were going to be moved and tormented as they had never been before. The turbulent genius of him who sang the tempests of his homeless soul was soon to disturb the limpidity of the sky; from Britain the cloud was advancing laden with thunder. From Weimar, where the great German, in the retreat of his Olympic indifference, was reviving the antiquity unveiled by Lessing and Winckelmann, the doleful story of love and suicide was making its way through Europe. The heroic lyre of French poetry was giving forth the first harmonies of religious revery under the touch of Châteaubriand. Rising from behind the ruins of the pseudo-classical theatre, the forgotten image of Shakespeare was revealing itself to enchanted souls. Never before had European minds been enraptured by such a unanimous collaboration of their literary leaders. Russia is in the movement.

The introducers of sentimentalism, and of the first

the "New Eloïse," by Rousseau, in 1761; yet in those days, the facilities for the diffusion of literature were so inferior to what they are to-day, that we must look for a real European influence of a literary style much later than the moment when its first specimens appear.

elements of romanticism into Russian literature, were the two above-mentioned writers, — Karamsin and Joukovsky; yet we should greatly underrate the value of the former were we to consider him only from this point of view. Whatever side of the intellectual life of the time we touch, we must speak of Karamsin: historical interests, literary taste, patriotic enthusiasm, national self-consciousness, have all been furthered and regulated by his literary activity. Noble, tender-hearted, romantic by natural inclination and not by mere literary preference, he swayed people's minds not only by the qualities of his work, but also by the authority of his personal character, the charm of which was such that even to-day its influence has not vanished, and seems to live on even in the most old-fashioned of his writings.

Born in 1766 (one year after Lomonossov's death), the son of a landed proprietor, near Simbirsk on the Volga, educated in the enlightening atmosphere of Novikov's circle, Karamsin belongs to both centuries; and as his life, so his work is divided into two periods. In the eighteenth century he is given exclusively to literary interests; he is at the head of a periodical, he writes novels. In the nineteenth century he passes over to historical studies; he becomes a scientist; he writes his famous "History of the Russian State." The first work by which he attracted public attention was his "Letters of a Russian Tourist." His great interest in foreign literatures, a close acquaintance with the writings of contemporary French and German philosophers, a correspondence carried on with Lavater,[1] —

[1] The French text edited in the "Bulletin" of the Academy of Sciences, vol. lxxiii. St. Petersburg, 1893.

all this for a long time stimulated his desire of visiting other countries. In 1789 he went abroad; he visited Germany, Switzerland, France, and England. Returning to Moscow, he founded a periodical.

"The Moscow Review" marks an era in the history of Russian literary culture. Never yet had the Russian public met with such a variety of subjects, with so much information of what was going on in foreign literatures, with such a number of translations of modern writers, with such interesting and authoritative critical essays. But the chief attraction of the periodical were the "Letters of a Russian Tourist," by Karamsin himself.[1] For the first time did a Russian traveller's diary display, not the usual scenes of picturesque and frivolous tourist life, but pictures of literary and scientific Europe.[2] "In Königsberg he pays a visit to Kant; in Berlin he makes the acquaintance of Nicolai, of the poet Platner; at Weimar he calls on Herder and Wieland; at Zürich he meets Lavater, with whom he had corresponded from Moscow. In Paris he makes the acquaintance of Marmontel, Barthélemy, Lévesque, and others. He visits the places where Voltaire and Rousseau used to live, the scenes where the 'New Eloïse' had been written."[3] All this surrounds him with an aureole of literary authority which no other writer had

[1] "Travels from Moscow through Prussia, Germany, Switzerland, France, and England." 3 vols. London, 1803. French translation. Paris, 1886. German translation. 6 vols. Leipzig, 1799–1802.

[2] "'The Letters of a Russian Tourist' are a great work in spite of all their superficiality and exiguity of content: for not only is that great which is great in itself, but often that which attains a great result, no matter by what means or ways." Belinsky, Works, vol. viii.

[3] A. N. Pypin, "The Beginning of the Nineteenth Century," "European Messenger," August, 1895 (Russian).

possessed before. His romantic aspirations, warmed by a close contact with western sentimentalism, produce a quite unknown fascination; his supple pen, with a wonderful mastery, introduces and combines neologisms which multiply the elements of speech and archaisms which freshen up the colouring of the vocabulary; never before had Russian prose obtained similar power over the readers.

His success attained its pinnacle on the appearance of his novel, "Poor Lizzie." A peasant girl from the environs of Moscow abandons herself to the promises of a young dandy, and when, instead of keeping them, he forsakes her and marries, she drowns herself in the pond which had been the mirror of their happiest hours. This unpretentious story, which makes us smile with its exaggerated sweetness, with its unconcealed didacticism, with the disproportion between condition and the speech of its characters, raised enthusiasm among contemporaries. For the first time people shed tears over a Russian book; for the first time did the touching incident of a love-story take place on national ground, between people of the race, among every-day circumstances. True, the peasant girl speaks a language which she never could have spoken, but it was a Russian peasant girl and not a shepherdess of a French pastoral; true, the Simeon Convent which lies near the famous pond is represented with "Gothic towers," but it was a Russian convent, a real one, which existed near Moscow, and people undertook literary pilgrimages to dream on the banks of "Lizzie's pond," or to cut their names on one of the neighbouring trees.[1] "Poor Liz-

[1] "His novels are false from the poetical point of view; yet they are important for having led people's taste towards that kind of literature which

zie" had shown literature its new direction; it had an important influence, though if measured by the purely æsthetical standard the novel has scarcely any value.[1]

Strange are the laws of literary reactions. Pseudo-classicism dealt with human passions which by their nature were comprehensible to everybody; but it chose such unnatural heroes that the passions ceased to interest us. Sentimental romanticism passed over to commonplace people; but it endowed them with such inappropriate feelings that we are just as little touched with their "naturalness" as we were with the exaggerations of the former. The sentimental school in its innovations had omitted an important point. It looked for local colour in everything. Social classes, nationalities, customs, dress, were differentiated, but not the human feelings. Authors did not consider the variety of human souls, but clothed them all in their own feelings. Whoever their hero was, to whatever social class or country or historical epoch he belonged, they endowed him with their own opinions, often with the collective creed of their literary school; their heroes became proclaimers of their ideas. Karamsin could not escape the common defect. In his novels it had but an æsthetical significance; it became of greater importance in his historical work.

A breath of sentimentalism runs through that won-

pictures feelings, passions, and events of private, inner life." Belinsky, vol. viii.

[1] French translations: "La pauvre Lise." Paris, 1808, and Kazan, 1817. Other novels by Karamsin: "Marpha, ou Novgorod conquise," translated by J. B. P. Moscow, 1804. Geneva, 1805. "Le Sensible" and "L'indifférent," translated by A. Khvostov. St. Petersburg, 1866.

derful reconstruction of Russia's past which is presented by the twelve volumes of his "History of the Russian State." "His views of history were rather those of an artist or those of a patriotic moralist than those of an investigator," says a critic.[1] And yet so gigantic is the result of twenty-five years of work, so conscientious its historical basis, so solid its texture, that we easily forgive it its romantic colouring.

The impression produced by Karamsin's "History" at its appearance was profound and unique. Think of the fascination exercised by his preceding writings, and you will understand what people felt when that same literary charm, captivating their minds and hearts, introduced them not into a world of fiction, but into the reality of their own history. "It was like the egg of Columbus," says Poushkin. On the 28th of January, 1818, Karamsin presented the Emperor Alexander I with the first eight volumes, and in twenty-five days the edition of thirty thousand copies was exhausted. Much has been accomplished in Russian historical science since, — no work has produced the same impression of a "revelation."[2] It was a monumental reconstruction of Russian history on a solid basis of chronicles and documents;[3] the "Annotations" reveal an almost universal learning in the author who had set

[1] A. N. Pypin, "Beginning of the Nineteenth Century."

[2] "Though rejected by historical and philosophical criticism from the number of the works which satisfy the contemporary mind, Karamsin's 'History' will remain forever a great work in the history of Russian literature in general, and especially in the history of Russian historical literature." Belinsky, vol. viii. 1843.

[3] Translations: "Histoire de l'Empire de Russie." 11 vols. Paris, 1819–1826. "Geschichte des Russischen Reiches." Riga, 1820–1827. "Istoria dell' impero di Russia." 8 vols. Venice, 1820–1824.

to work as a poet and at the contact of the archives had by degrees grown to be a scientific historian.[1]

His personality, like his work, has a glory of its own. "Karamsin is dear to us," says a critic, "not only by that which he accomplished, but by that which he was. He was a Russian by feeling, not alone by birth. . . . But being a Russian he was a man, and nothing human did he consider strange to him; he was a son of universal civilization. . . . He dives into the depths of our past, out of forgotten archives he resuscitates for the Russian people the memories of its antiquity; but he remains a son of his epoch, and he loves the roots of the past in the bloom of the present."[2] Seldom has a writer's personality been surrounded with more deference. It has been said that he was the first who "by his talent, his culture, and his moral qualities elevated the title of author in our fatherland."[3] He never accepted any official situation; asked to take a professorship, first at the University of Dorpat, later at the University of Harkov, he declined both offers; till the end of his days he remained "historiographer by appointment." In the spring of 1826, by order of the Emperor Nicolas I, a man-of-war was standing in readiness to take the invalid historian to Italy; but he was unable to avail himself of this last mark of imperial favour. He died on the 22d of May.

A still greater harmony between individual inclina-

[1] "Had we the misfortune of losing all documental sources, science might still continue its way and progress relying upon his work. Another history is contained in his 'Annotations,' a history in its own words." Pogadin, Works, vol. ii (Russian).

[2] M. Katkoff: leading article in the "Moscow Gazette," 1866, No. 254.

[3] Galahov, "History of Russian Literature," vol. ii.

tions and the literary tendencies of the time is presented by his friend, Joukovsky (1783–1852), the tender poet of romantic melancholy.[1] Strange to say, though with him Russian poetry made a decided and important step forward, he hardly seems to deserve the credit of his own work. He seems irresponsible for his fame. So much does his poetry appear as the immediate genuine result of his nature, that if his critical essays did not prove the contrary, we might think he was an unconscious innovator; whereas he was perfectly aware of his significance. In a letter to a friend, he calls himself "father of German romanticism in Russia, and poetical tutor of German and English witches and devils." And in fact all that was congenial to his romantic soul in European literature was absorbed, assimilated, and rendered in his ballads. He became the channel through which romanticism inundated Russian poetry; he gave the last blow to expiring pseudo-classicism, and freed poetry from the folly of sentimentalism.[2] But all this was accomplished without

[1] The best biography of Joukovsky: Dr. Carl von Seidlitz, "Wassily Andreyevitsch Joukoffsky. Ein russisches Dichterleben." Mitau, 1870 (and a second edition).

[2] Some critics detect traits of pseudo-classicism in Joukovsky, for instance in his poem, "The Bard in the Russian Camp," where Russian soldiers appear in the attire of Roman warriors. Yet we are inclined to take it less as a survival of pseudo-classicism than as a literary manifestation of the so-called "Empire style," which imposed itself on all Europe under Napoleon I. It is the same influence in virtue of which on the medals commemorating the "Fatherland War," Russians are represented as ancient Romans. Everything in those days, even church architecture, was undergoing the influence of that heroic military style. No wonder that romantic poetry drew up its *mise-en-scène* from the same source. An interesting example is this of plastic arts influencing literature; it can be traced up not only in Joukovsky and in Russia but elsewhere also.

any fighting on his part; he did not actively set himself against the pseudo-classical current; he simply let the dreamy aspirations of his soul float down the general stream of romanticism which was bearing along the western literature of the time. Therefore, we might call him, at any rate, a passive, if not an unconscious, innovator.

Joukovsky presents an interesting literary figure in the sense that his genuine poems and his innumerable translations possess an equal value: with his genuine poems he implanted romanticism in Russian poetry, while for his translations from German and English he took only that which stood in immediate relationship to his own aspirations.[1] This determines the charming harmony of his work in which elements of his own and foreign poetry combine in the atmosphere of an elegiac serenity.[2] A constant thought of the vanity of our earthly life, the certitude of its continuance beyond the grave, a Christian belief in the sacredness of the human soul, a vague consciousness of some mystic relationship between the animate and inanimate world, — all these were new motives in Russian poetry which enlarged its horizon. "His romantic muse," says the critic Belinsky, "gave soul and heart to Russian poetry; she taught it the mystery of suffering, of loss, of mystic

[1] Works of the following poets were translated by Joukovsky: Gray, Dryden, Southey, Goldsmith, Moore, Scott, Byron; Goethe, Schiller, Uhland, Geibel, Körner, La Motte-Fouquet, Zedlitz, Halm, Rückert, Grimm, Chamisso. Apart from these stand the translations of "Nal and Damayanty" and of the "Odyssey."

[2] "Joukovsky did not merely translate Schiller and other German and English poets, — no, he translated *romanticism* into Russian. . . . This is Joukovsky's significance; this is his merit towards Russian literature." Belinsky, vol. viii.

relations, and of anxious strivings towards the mysterious world which has no name, no place, and yet in which a young soul feels its sacred native land." Poetry appeared with an aureole it never had worn before. If you call to mind the words of Trediakovsky, who said that poetry was "like fruit and candy on a rich table after heavy dishes"; if you take into consideration that Derjavine was praising Catherine the Great because

> "Poetry to thee is as pleasant,
> As sweet, agreeable, and useful
> As lemonade in summer time,"

you will realize what people felt when Joukovsky appeared, and — in those verses of which Gogol used to say that they were "immaterial like a vision, and floating like the intangible sound of an æolian harp" — proclaimed in sweet melody that

> "Poetry is God in the holy dreams of earth."

With Joukovsky poetry in Russia receives its real place; it stands independent above practical life; its limits have been widened, its elements multiplied. It is not yet real genuine Russian poetry, — the hour for this had not come; the earth had, indeed, already brought forth her poet, but he had not yet spoken. But in the meantime, all the elements of a poetry coming from abroad had been introduced into its domain; the language had been shaped to sweetest verse, people had been shown what poetry was, what poetry meant, hearts had vibrated with purest aspirations, ideals had been pointed out, the ways were cleared, horizons were widened, the heavens stood open, — now the poet might

come. And he came, he of whom Belinsky said that his poetry was "earth instinct with heaven."[1]

In 1820, a poem appeared, — a fairy-tale in popular style; it was entitled "Rouslan and Ludmila," and was signed "Alexander Poushkin." The name had not been seen before, but literary circles already knew who he was. A student of the Lyceum of Tsarskoye Selo, for some time past he had been attracting the attention of poets and writers. It soon became known that he had already published in periodicals; that he was but fourteen when his first boyish poem appeared in 1813; that his were those poems signed with the initials "A. P.," in one of which the author, almost a child, declared that he would barter the immortality of his soul to secure immortality for his songs. Those who understood poetry expected great things. Old Derjavine, on the edge of the grave, had, as you remember, bowed his head before him "who on the school-bench had surpassed all other poets"; Joukovsky submitted his poems to his criticism, and deliberately erased those verses which the boy's wonderful intelligence could not comprehend at once.

"Nothing can be compared," says Belinsky, "to the enthusiasm and the indignation raised by Poushkin's first poem, 'Rouslan and Ludmila.'[2] Only few creations of genius have succeeded in provoking such an uproar as this childish poem."[3] What a measure of

[1] Belinsky, vol. viii.

[2] German translation by Göring: "Metrische Uebersetzungen aus dem Russischen." Moscow, 1833. "Rouslan and Ludmila" was arranged for the stage and set to music by M. Glinka, the author of the "Life for the Tsar" (d. 1857).

[3] Belinsky, vol. viii.

the progress presented by Poushkin's career does this statement give us! He inaugurates a new period of genuine art, he is the culminating point of Russian poetry, and his first poem — greeted by some as a sunrise, reviled by others as an insolent attempt against established classicism — is mere childishness compared to his subsequent work. The magnitude of his literary career will appear still more striking if we consider its duration. The first chapters of "Rouslan and Ludmila" were written in 1818, — he was nineteen years old. On the 27th of January, 1837, he was mortally wounded in a duel.[1] Nineteen years had been allotted to him to become what he was, — the glory of a country, the summit of a nation's poetry, the implanter of the *jalons* of a future literature, among the great poets of the world one of the greatest. And yet, it remains a burning wound for a Russian heart, an insulting cruelty on the part of destiny, to have to consider as the work of an accomplished career that which was the scant fruit of life cut short. It required several years before Russian critics realized the fact and found the necessary calm for the forming of a true judgment of his career and of his work. Belinsky made the first attempt in 1843 at examining Poushkin's work as an accomplished cycle; his famous volume viii, written less than ten years after Poushkin's death,[2] is a wonderful monument to his memory. Since then, critical

[1] He died three days later, in the house of Prince P. Wolkonsky, 12 Moyka. A commemorative plate adorns the façade. Poushkin's adversary, the French Baron, Dantes de Heckeren, died at Sultz (Alsace) on the 5th of November, 1895, at the age of eighty-four.

[2] The articles which compose vol. viii of his works appeared in the "Fatherland Records" of St. Petersburg, during the years 1843–1846.

and biographical researches have never ceased. The "Poushkiniana," a catalogue published ten years ago, registers over 4500 works from 1827 to 1886.[1]

You cannot form an idea of what a Russian must feel when called upon — as I am to-day — to unveil before a foreign audience the beauties of Poushkin's poetry. An almost religious veneration, augmented by the warmth of patriotic feeling, a love which is inspired only by the highest and purest specimens of artistic expression, prove powerless before the difficulty of the task. The difficulty lies not only in the degree of beauty, but far more in its quality. Beauty, with Poushkin, is, unlike so many other poets, an independent element; it is not accessory to an idea or an opinion or a philosophical system; it is not an ornament, not an ingredient, — it is the very substance of his poetry. In our days of enforced analyzing and reflection, when a writer cannot do less than profess a sharply delineated code of moral and political principles, critics may well feel disconcerted at this wonderful man who sways our minds and renders himself master of our souls without letting himself be classified in any philosophical or political school; people endeavoured to endow him with a creed, with a programme; the attempt was made to render his civic virtues as shown in his poems responsible for the impression produced by his talent. But people had to give it up, their efforts were vain, for Poushkin presented contradictions, and his political poems were not his best. People ought to have known that a man can be as simply a poet as a politician or a scientist. Belinsky

[1] Composed by V. Mejoff. Edited by the Imperial Alexander Lyceum. St. Petersburg, 1886.

understood this,—he who said that "the more Poushkin grew as an artist, the more did his individuality vanish and disappear behind the wonderful and glorious world of his contemplation."[1] All who in poetry look for enjoyment of the soul, and not for a statement of opinions, will ask nothing more from Poushkin's "world of contemplation" than its wonder and its glory. The poet himself did not mean to give more.

> "Not for the tumult of the world,
> Not for booty, nor for fighting;
> We are born for inspiration,
> For sweet melody and prayer."[2]

And the writer who quoted these verses at the dedication of Poushkin's monument in Moscow exclaimed: "What other 'usefulness' do you expect? Are these verses not a blessing in themselves?"[3]

A countryman of yours whom you all revere as an authority in questions of art, one day defined in the following simple words the moral value of æsthetic enjoyments: "By being beautiful the rose makes you good." The significance of these words comes back to my mind now that I have to speak of the beauty of Poushkin's poetry. It presents such a fusion of form and content that no critical power can part them; its ethical value is the immediate emanation of its æsthetical excellence.

What was the material whence Poushkin abstracted

[1] Belinsky, vol. viii.

[2] In another place we have tried to define (very briefly and superficially indeed) Poushkin's views on poetry and the poet's vocation. ("The Poet in Poushkin's Poetry." "Addresses." Winship & Co., Chicago. Unity Publishing Co., 1893.)

[3] Address by J. Aksakov on the 7th of June, 1880.

beauty to be incarnated in verse? You remember what other poets had sung of. In the eighteenth century they spoke of events, customs, habits; they pictured the outside world; in the beginning of the nineteenth century they sing of feelings, dreams, the inner world of man with its vague strivings towards an unknown world. Poushkin comes and effects the fusion; the outside world becomes reflected in human feelings, the inner world is brought forth from its seclusion, the human mind is turned away from its sterile strivings towards unattainable regions and restored to earth, for earthly beauty is part of universal beauty, and man's destiny is not to atrophy himself in dreams, but to exert himself in life. Life, — this is what the poet is going to sing of, and he is going to grasp it in all its breadth of universality, in all its depth of individuality. He takes life in the present, and gives social pictures of contemporary Russia (among these the famous novel entitled "Eugene Oneguin"); he takes life in historical distance, and in his drama "Boris Godounoff," which recalls to life the "times of confusion," a whole country seems to revive;[1] he takes life in ethnographical distance, and with a wonderful versatility and power of assimilation he gives specimens of Greek and Roman poetry, of oriental songs, Spanish romances, mediæval legends; he goes to the root of popular life, and with the material offered by Russian songs and fairy-tales introduces into poetry elements which, till then, had been considered base or vulgar, and which thenceforth are to become the favourite subject of Russian writers. Lastly, he descends into his own soul;

[1] French translation. "Boris Godounoff" and "Poèmes Dramatiques," translated by Tourgenieff and Viardot. Paris, 1862.

and here, the deeper he goes, the higher he rises; the more individual he is, the more universal he becomes; the wonderful series of his short lyrical poems is one of the most precious jewels of man's creation.[1]

Let us work our way through this life-gallery by examining at least a few of his works. "Eugene Oneguin," a novel in verse, is the most typical of Poushkin's creations; it is typical in a double sense: the subject being typical of its time, the poem being representative of the poet's personality. Yet before we examine this novel we must throw a glance on the society of the time.

The Russian society of the twenties and thirties of this century presents a character which has a charm of its own. After the chaotic process of formation under Peter the Great, after the period of awkward adoption of the new institutions under his successors, after the imitative superficiality of the showy court of Catherine the Great, and about the time of Alexander I, as you may see from the beautiful social panorama which Count Leo Tolstoi pictures in his epic novel, "War and Peace"—the upper classes crystallize themselves into a society which, in spite of the deficiencies of its scientific instruction, contains examples of high literary education. The events of 1812 and 1814—the invasion of Napoleon I, his flight, Emperor Alexander's march at the head of the European coalition, the entrance into Paris, Napoleon's fall and Alexander's triumph[2]—called forth in Russia, just as in other

[1] A very complete enumeration of Poushkin's works, in the proceedings of the Anglo-Russian Literary Society (London), 3d of July. Paper by Mr. F. P. Marchant.

[2] On this time, numerous contemporary memoirs, French, Austrian, Prussian.

countries, and perhaps more vigorously, an outburst of national feeling. Karamsin's "History" appeared at the right moment. The upper classes set themselves to study their people and its language. By degrees French speech, which was not only the test of good breeding, but for a long time had been considered the only agent of proper education,[1] lost its exclusive authority; elements of native life emerged to the surface; people eagerly set to their study.[2] A number of literary societies arose, and filled the air with discussions on the respective merits of the old and the new style in poetry. Karamsin's reform of the literary style had raised indignation among the elder generation.[3] Poushkin, with his youthful enthusiasm, appeared to it still more disrespectful. The younger men, who called themselves the "Karamsinians," joined together and formed the well-known society called "Arzamas."[4] The best literary forces of the time—Joukovsky, Batioushkov,[5] Poushkin,

[1] Even Poushkin, that artist in the Russian language, was writing to a friend: "Je vous parlerai la langue de l'Europe, elle m'est plus familière" (letter to Chaddayev, 1820).

[2] Poushkin in his country place wrote down popular songs which he picked up from peasants and from his old nurse, Arina Rodionovna, to whom Russian literature is indebted for having initiated the poet into the treasures of our folk-lore. "Before dinner," he writes to his brother, "I work, after dinner I ride, in the evening I listen to fairy-tales, and thus fill up the gaps of my pitiful education."

[3] In the polemics of Karamsin with Shishkoff, the leader of the partisans of the "classical style," we may look for the first differentiation of the two currents which later accentuated themselves as Slavophilism and "Westernism."

[4] The name of a town in the province of Nijni Novgorod.

[5] 1787–1855. A poet who composed chiefly in the style of the antique anthology (comparable to Parny). With Joukovsky he shares the honour of being the immediate predecessor of Poushkin. Had he not been followed by the latter, his diction would have remained for a long time

Prince Viazemsky,[1] Ouvarov[2]—were members of the "Arzamas." Society was captivated by literary interests. Joukovsky, presented at court by Ouvarov, was appointed lecturer to the Empress.[3] The gatherings in the "Pavilion des Roses" at her summer residence of Pavlovsk were famous in those days.[4]

Such were the centres from which literary tastes radiated. We must say to the honour of the leading class at this time that not only did it take an interest in literature, but it supplied nearly all the poets and writers; in later times literary interests, as they spread, seem to have somewhat abandoned the court, but at the beginning of the century the Russian aristocracy presented perhaps a unique case in the history of literature—it actually made Russian literature. Poushkin belonged to this class, and his literary career began in the atmosphere we have just described. Yet in

unrivalled. Poushkin considered that Batioushkov was for the Russian language what Petrarch was for the Italian. (His brilliant career was interrupted by a mental disease in 1822.)

[1] 1792–1878. Satirist and critic. Under Secretary of Public Education.

[2] Minister of Public Education from 1833 to 1849.

[3] The dowager Empress Maria Theodorovna (Princess of Würtemberg), widow of Paul I, daughter-in-law of Catherine the Great, mother of Alexander I and Nicholas I; founder of numerous educational and charitable institutions which, after her death, were united under a special ministry known as Department of the Institutions of the Empress Mary. See Pr. S. Wolkonsky, "Higher Education of Women in Russia." ("Addresses." Winship & Co., Chicago. Unity Publishing Co.)

[4] A favourite at these gatherings was the popular "Grandpa Kryloff," the well-known fabulist (1768–1844). No Russian poet has obtained as many translations as Kryloff. His works exist in twenty languages (*all* Indo-European, many oriental, and several Semitic); there are seventy-two French, thirty-two Italian, twelve English translations; the best among the latter ones, by M. Harrison, "Kryloff's Original Fables." London, 1884.

his "Eugene Oneguin" Poushkin does not introduce us into any of these centres; he moves in their neighbourhood; he does not picture intellectual or literary exceptions; he takes the frivolous, average, impersonal society, the great anonymous crowd of balls, theatres, concerts, and other social gatherings, in the monotony of which people look for remedy against the weariness of indolence and leisure.

Oneguin, the chief personage of the novel, is a commonplace man, but therefore all the more interesting — the less exceptional an individual the more representative he is. Poushkin's hero is representative of the poet's generation. Trained by a French tutor, he has received the varnish of learning, — just what is necessary for drawing-rooms, — excellent French, anecdotic history "from Romulus up to date," good manners, dancing, a touch of Latin, — and he was accomplished. After all, as the author says: —

> "We've all been taught in childhood
> Just anything and anyhow;
> Thus to amaze with education
> Is no hard problem now."

Thrown into the whirlwind of Petersburg life, the young dandy soon feels bored with the fastidious pleasures of the world. At this psychological moment the inheritance left by an uncle calls him to the country. Petersburg with its palaces, the Neva with its granite quays, theatres, restaurants, actresses, and dancers, vanish away, — Russian country in all its virgin poetry unrolls the green horizons of its prairies and forests.

By his neighbour Lensky, a youth just returned from the University of Göttingen, an enthusiastic admirer of

Schiller, and himself a poet, Oneguin is introduced into the house of old Mrs. Larin and her two daughters—Tatiana and Olga. The younger one is betrothed to Lensky; she is a cheerfully fresh and healthy girl, but uninteresting. Quite different is the elder sister; fond of reverie, she prefers nature's solitude to people's company.

> "And on her balcony she often
> Anticipates the dawning day."

With some French volume on her knees, Tatiana spends hours in the garden, for

> "Romantic dreams were her companions
> From earliest days of lullabies."

Oneguin appears and becomes the master of Tatiana's dreams. The poor girl does not withstand the impetus of the passion which invades her, and forgetting all the precepts of her education, she writes a letter to Oneguin which is full of sincerity and poetry. The dandy, saturated with the love adventures of drawing-rooms and theatres which he has experienced in Petersburg, regards the confession of the provincial girl as a nuisance. He mentally prepares his answer, and after a decent lapse of time he calls at his neighbours'; he finds Tatiana in the garden. In a long sermon, which is a masterpiece of selfishness draped in abnegation, he pours a flood of cold philosophy on her glowing love, and rejects a happiness of which he professes to consider himself unworthy. In the meantime, the wedding day of Olga and Lensky is approaching. But Oneguin, tortured with spleen, dissatisfied with others and with himself, finds a cruel pleasure in destroying

the happiness of the lovers. One day, in a fit of bad humour, he strikes up a quarrel with Lensky, and provokes him to a duel. The young poet falls.

Years have passed; years of discontent and restless wanderings for Oneguin. We are again at St. Petersburg. In the dazzling scenes of a brilliant ball the high life of the capital displays itself before our eyes. Oneguin is among the crowd, as always — indifferent and bored. All at once he is struck as by a vision; he stands petrified; he does not trust his eyes! "Do tell me," he asks Prince Grenim, the tall and handsome general — "Do tell me, Prince, who is that lady in the crimson turban, who is talking to the ambassador of Spain?" The Prince gazes at him with amazement, and introduces him to his wife. It is she, Tatiana Larin; they had met in Moscow, two years before.

This time Oneguin falls in love. The timid girl who looked so insignificant in her homely provincialism, now, since she is on the same social level as he, rises with all her moral superiority. He writes a letter; his desperate cry of passion is left without an answer; he writes another letter, a third one, always with no result. After several months of torment, on one forenoon he finally decides to call at her house. The ante-chamber is empty; he goes further — nobody in the drawing-room; he opens one door more; pale and weary in her morning dress, the princess is weeping over a letter.

> "Who would have not in this brief moment
> Her silent suffering divined,
> And not discovered in the peeress
> Poor Tania[1] of the former days!"

[1] Diminutive of Tatiana.

He falls at her knees, he grasps her hand, — he presses it to his lips. She does not prevent him. For a while they remain so, and then: —

> "'Enough,' she says at last; 'arise,
> I must explain myself. Oneguin,
> Do you remember still the day
> When in the garden, in that alley
> We met, and when so very humbly
> I listened to your sermoning?
> To-day my turn has come.'"

Nothing can give an idea of the beauty of Tatiana's answer. In a retrospective glance the story of her love, as it unfolded itself in the loneliness of the country, is disclosed to Oneguin's eyes; Tatiana's heart is torn by the love of him who rejected her in those days, and the scorn of him who persecutes her with a love she cannot accept.

> "'And yet, so near was happiness,
> So possible!'"

she exclaims. Her last words fall like hammer-strokes on his heart.

> "'I love you, — feigning would be useless, —
> But now, Oneguin, I am another's;
> And will be true to him for life.'"

She leaves the room. Oneguin stands thunderstruck. But spurs resound behind the door, Tatiana's husband enters.

At this wretched moment of his life, the poet abandons his hero.

Such are the pictures of life which unwind themselves in the eight cantos of fluent iambic verse.

What can render the charm which floats over this simple story? We even cannot use comparison.[1] No other literature possesses anything of the kind. In some particulars the poem may be compared with Byron's "Don Juan," but only in its exterior forms: the same short strophes, the same rapidity, the same frequent digressions, and the same constant presence of the author's personality. Yet, how different this personality from that of his British contemporary![2] Not a drop of bitterness,—he is limpid; the poetical prism through which he contemplates reality is of purest crystal, uncoloured. And what does it not refract! This man who was our greatest romanticist was at the same time our first realist; his poetry shrinks from no detail. But it is never raw life he gives us, it is always *pictures* of life—real, not embellished, yet refracted life—transfigured by art. He makes us love nature through his poetry, and by contemplating nature we love his poetry which has embodied it. What has it not incorporated!—

Petersburg! The austere beauty of its winter scenery; Petersburg, with the romantic charm of its "white nights" in the spring, when the sky never darkens, and "the dawn hastens to relieve the evening glow granting the night but half an hour"; Petersburg, with its monuments, with its history; Peter the Great

[1] Among the translations known to us the German by Bodenstedt is the least unsatisfactory, though much inferior to his translation of Lermontov's poems. ("Poetische Werke aus dem Russischen übersetzt," 3 B. Berlin, 1854–1855.) English translation by Lieut.-Col. Spalding, 1881.

[2] Poushkin in his younger years had undergone the contagion of the Byronic epidemy. Later he judged the British poet severely. "Ce Byron n'a jamais conçu qu'un seul caractère—c'est le sien." (Letter to Rayevsky, 1825.)

standing on the swampy desert shores of newly conquered Neva, and foreseeing the future city of granite, the seaport alive with ships, and the festal sight of their medley of flags.

Moscow! The sunny air of its Sunday mornings filled with the ringing of its church and cathedral bells, the busy monotony of its interminable streets, the pride of the "golden-headed" Kremlin, the sombre figure of Napoleon expecting to see the city "kneeling at his feet," — and the city answering with flames.

And the pictures of society! The ball at Mrs. Larin's country house. The types, — what portraits with a few strokes are even the secondary characters! Tatiana's old nurse, that peasant servant who in her humble condition reveals treasures of devotion. The scene, when Tatiana, in the torture of a sleepless night, questions her on the days of her youth, whether she had loved, and how she married; the agony of the poor young soul who for the first time realizes that she loves, the trouble of the old woman who thinks the child is ill, the silence in the sleeping house, the whisper of the two sitting on the bed, the oppressing heat of the summer night, and the cold splendour of the "inspiring moon," — makes one of the finest pages of all literature.

The descriptions of nature, the country scenery, the times of the year, above all, autumn! What can render the charm of all this, and the irresistible contagion of life which takes hold of you and makes you vibrate with the poet? For the poet is omnipresent in whatever he describes, infused in every word; discreet, in the background, never didactic, yet always there, his overflowing soul fills everything; the reader is never

left alone, he is made the confidant of the poet's joys and sorrows, the companion of his humour and wit. And this companionship is so charming, that when we get to the end of the novel we do not know whether we regret more to have to close the book, or to have to part with the author. And the poet is aware of his charm, he is conscious of the part he plays in the fascination produced by his work. Nothing can be more touching than the concluding words, in which he takes leave of the reader, except, perhaps, the lines which follow them, and in which he takes leave of his work and his characters.

"Farewell, farewell, my strange companion,
And thou, O vision of my heart!
Farewell, my insignificant,
Yet constant, vital work! I've known
With you all that is dear to poets:
Oblivion of worldly tempests
In sweet companionship of friends.
Oh, many, many days have vanished
Since young Tatiana and Oneguin
Confusedly in dreamy distance
Did first appear before my soul,
And the outlines of this story
Through the enchanting crystal prism
I distinctly yet discerned.
But those, to whom in friendly meetings
I used to read its early verse, —
Some are dispersed, some are no more,
As Sadi said, in times of yore!"

We also will take leave of Oneguin that we may pass on to Poushkin's lyrical poems.[1]

[1] "Eugene Oneguin" has been arranged for the stage and set to music by P. Tschaikovsky. It is one of the most poetical creations of the regretted composer (d. 1893).

It would be difficult to state to what feeling in Poushkin's lyrics the poet gives preference. Love or friendship, sorrow or joy, wit and laughter or tears and pain, — you cannot say which is the poet's favourite, for he is equally excellent in all. In his artistic contemplation of life, human happiness and human misery, as objects of poetry, are of such equal importance to him, that not only does he describe them equally well, but never do they appear single in his verse; as life itself, so the different feelings in life are complex. Distress is never left without a consoling beam of hope; joy goes never without a warning, and a vague presentiment of death floats through his gayest poems. His joys are sad, his sorrows are transitory, but equally full and profound. Pouring rain with brilliant sunshine, such is his poetry. I do not think it is exaggerating if I say that, compared to Poushkin, other lyrical poets appear one-sided. This complexity of feeling with a total absence of any predominating element is what produces that tranquillizing impression we gather from Poushkin's work as a whole. The wonderful harmony of his poetry comes from the fact that all its elements are rooted in the human soul; nothing outside, nothing supernatural, nothing beyond the reach of comprehension, no sterile strivings in ideal regions. Whereas so many other poets divert the energies of our soul by making them deviate into a world of dreams, with Poushkin they are confined to real life; the human soul finds its joys, as well as the remedies against its pains, in its own substance, and not in trying to escape from its own self.

We shall now better understand Belinsky's expression: "Earth imbued with heaven." As sorrow is never

without hope, joy never without regret, so earth has no value without heaven; and so is heaven to us mortals, if taken apart from earth, like an ideal without the means of realizing it. Only through their earthly incorporation do our ideal strivings acquire real value. What would remain of them were we to overlook earth in contemplating heaven? What would remain of the idea of a statue did the marble fall into dust? Like faith without works, so is the ideal sterile without matter. Earthly life is matter of heavenly life. We want earth in order to obtain heaven; we should destroy our heaven did we not love our earth. Therefore, a healthy, a vigorous, a vital poetry is Poushkin's. "It is not a poetical lie which inflames imagination," says Belinsky, "not one of those lies which make man hostile at his first encounter with reality, and exhausts his forces in early useless struggle."[1] No better book indeed can be put into the hands of youth; it furthers a simultaneous development, a harmonious growth of feeling, thought, and aspirations.

One more word on Poushkin's language. No idea of its magic fascination can be given by translation or comparison. It is the finest and yet the most natural Russian verse. The best of his lyric poems, those which sound like pure music, are like the simplest spoken speech if we consider the words apart from their phonetic and inner charm. You know how an index page of a music book looks. Each musical piece is represented by its first bars; so appears to me the index page of Poushkin's lyric poems. Most of them have no title; each is noted by its first line, and each of these lines is like the beginning of a beautiful melody.

[1] Vol. viii.

Among these treasures let me pick out one poem, not to be regarded as a specimen of melody, of course, in its defective English transcription, but in order to give you at least a feeble touch of the great poet's soul.

"I loved you; though my love has in my bosom
Perchance not died away completely yet;
Still, let it not disturb you any longer,—
I promise you shall not be made to grieve.

"I loved you hopelessly, I loved in silence,
By shyness, then by jealousy oppressed;
I loved withal so tenderly, so truly,
As, God grant, you be by others loved."

We must take leave of Poushkin's poetry now. We leave it with the sad consciousness of the insufficiency of our analysis, for Poushkin's poetry is one of those subjects in regard to which the critic feels desperate: however conscientious his analysis, it will always look as if he had spoken, not so much of the poet, as of his own admiration. We have endeavoured to expose the reasons of the deep veneration we profess towards Poushkin; whether successful or not, to those who would suspect us of too much enthusiasm, we will simply answer that it is not even the hundredth part of what we feel.[1]

[1] Some translations of Poushkin's prose: "La fille du capitaine," trad. par L. Viardot. Paris, 1866. "La dame de pique," trad. par Prospère Mérimée. Brussels, 1852. "Le brigand gentilhomme," trad. de C. de Loulay. Paris, 1864. "Novellen," übersetzt von Troebst. Jena, 1840–1848. "Geschichte des Pugatschewschen Aufstandes." Uebersetzt von Brandeis. Stuttgart, 1840. "Le faux Pierre III," trad. par le Pr. Aug. Galitzin. Paris, 1858. "Russian Romance," by A. S. Poushkin. Translation by Mrs. J. Buchon Tefler. London, 1875. "Marie: a Story of Russian Love," translated by Marie Zielinska. McClurg, Chicago.

Poushkin's national character has often been made an object of discussion. In how far is he representative? In how far characteristically Russian? A man, it has been said, who can so perfectly assimilate Greek antiquity, romantic Spain, and the legendary Middle Ages, belongs to the universe, not to a nation. A French critic refuses him all "ethnical" colouring: "Does it diminish his greatness," he asks, "if we take him from a nation and pass him over to humanity?"[1] As if foreseeing this judgment, Belinsky, forty years before, had answered it by remarking that a poet who is so wonderful in picturing other nationalities, *ipso facto*, cannot but be wonderful in picturing his own people.[2] And still earlier, four years before Poushkin's death, Gogol was writing: "Those pictures of Poushkin's, which are imbued with Russian spirit, can be understood only by him to whom Russia is a fatherland."[3] Thus his national value becomes one of the elements of his universal significance. The idea has been developed by Dostoyevsky, who qualifies Poushkin by a name which I find no other way of rendering than by forming a Greek word: "Πανάνθρωπος,"[4] to signify that he combined all human qualities, and therefore belonged to all nations; while at the same time his very universality appears as a specific national trait.[5]

We think the discussion vain — vain for Russians. We will let others decide in how far Poushkin helps to the understanding of the *Russian* character; that which

[1] Vte E. M. de Vogué, "Le Roman Russe," 1886. [2] Vol. viii.

[3] "Arabesques." ("A Few Words on Poushkin.")

[4] "Vsechelovek," from *vess*, "all," and *chelovek*, "man."

[5] Address read at the consecration of Poushkin's monument in Moscow, 7th of June, 1880.

makes him dear to us is that being a Russian he helped the Russians to understand *human* character. He had foreseen this, his national significance, when in his paraphrase of Horace's *Monumentum exegi* he says: —

> "And to my people's heart shall I be dear forever,
> By having with my lyre stirred feelings good and true."

But this does not diminish the universal value of him who writes: —

> "Not wholly shall I die. Survivor of the body,
> My soul will overcome oblivion in its songs,
> And glorious shall I be as long as under heaven
> Doth breathe and sing one poet's soul."

Karamsin said that it was "good to write for Russians, still better to write for all men." When the world shall have learned to read him, the world will see that Poushkin wrote for all men. May the day come for every one of you. For my part, I sincerely hope that the time will come when all that is beautiful on earth will be made accessible to everybody; that portions of humanity will no longer be deprived of that which belongs to humanity for the mere reason of not understanding another nation's language. Goethe's words that "that which is really excellent distinguishes itself through its belonging to all mankind" will then be not only a theoretical assertion, but the statement of a practical reality. May the time come when we shall all meet in those superior regions where human genius has founded a fatherland for every man.

LECTURE VII

(1837–1861)

An epoch of youth. Lermontov, — romantic pessimism, parallel with Poushkin. Koltzoff, — popular element in poetry. Literary and other aristocratism of the time (Nicholas I).

Gogol. Genesis of the naturalistic school. Poushkin and Gogol. Significance of Gogol's appearance. The writer and his torment. Gogol's laughter in its different stages. Place of the satire in national evolution.

"The forties." The Moscow university. Belinsky, — his influence as critic. Slavophiles and "Westernists." Scientific studies of national questions. Accession of Alexander II.

LECTURE VII

(1837–1861)

This morning, like the spirit of a youth
That means to be of note, begins betime.

— SHAKESPEARE.

IN March, 1837, a few weeks after Poushkin's death, Gogol, who then lived in Rome, wrote to a friend: "No more terrible news could I have received from Russia. All enjoyment of life, all my best enjoyment has vanished with him. Nothing did I undertake without his advice. Not a line did I write without feeling him at my side. What would he say, what would he take notice of, what would he laugh at, what would he grant his indestructible eternal approval to, — this was the only thing which interested me, the only thing which kept up my strength." In such terms did the founder of the Russian naturalistic school deplore the death of the great romantic poet.

These words of Gogol are a precious link in the chain of Russia's literary development. The two poles of artistic contemplation of life, the summits of its idealistic beauties, and the abysses of its realistic ugliness are put side by side; bound by the force of talent, consecrated by reciprocal deference, the two opposite tendencies flow together into the great literary stream

which is about to rise and which will reflect all that Russian life has to reveal in its yet unexplored horizons.

With Gogol, we touch the very source of the new literary school, of the one which was to attain its full development towards the beginning of the sixties, and which, through the works of Tourgenieff, Dostoyevsky, and Leo Tolstoi, gained for the Russian novel the rank it nowadays holds in universal literature. We cannot, however, yet pass on to the great prosaist. In speaking of Poushkin, we ascended to such idealistic heights, that we almost forgot the reality of life. In speaking of poetry we forgot about the poets; for Poushkin stood not alone; a pleiad of young poets grouped themselves round their young leader.

Youthfulness, physical as well as moral, is the characteristic of the period. The spirit of the time furthered the early blossoming of talents, and never did Russian society feel younger than in the first decade of our century. Everybody was young. The Emperor Alexander I ascended the throne at twenty-three, when, as Victor Hugo would have said, "the century was one year old." Poushkin revealed himself at nineteen, and was killed at thirty-eight. His friend Delvig made himself known in literature at sixteen, and died at thirty-three. Gogol was a literary celebrity at twenty-two, and attained his culminating point with his famous comedy, the "Inspector," five years later. The other play which disputes with the "Inspector" the sovereignty over the Russian comic theatre, "Distress from too Much Intellect," by Griboyedov, appeared when its author was twenty-eight years old (1823).[1] Yet the

[1] "Gore ot Ouma." Translation by N. Benardaky. London, 1857. Two German translations. Reval, 1831; Leipzig, 1853.

most wonderful of all, the youngest among Poushkin's young contemporaries, was Lermontov, who first appeared in print at the age of twenty-one (1835), and was shot in a duel at twenty-seven; in the course of six years he had raised himself to the level of the highest poetical fame. In Russian literature his name immediately follows that of Poushkin, he does not merely continue, he completes his elder contemporary. Among those minor poets who surrounded the author of "Eugene Oneguin," Lermontov is the only one whose individuality is powerful enough to stand independently, apart from Poushkin; and whereas such gentle and pleasant poets as Delvig, Baratynsky, Yasykov, in spite of the charm of their language and the excellence of their poetical form, are but satellites of the great star, Lermontov nourishes such flames of smothered passion in his glowing heart, that he lights his own star with its own individual splendour.[1]

We are far from Poushkin's harmony in Lermontov's poetry; earth and heaven are strongly separated, they never mingle, and the very impossibility of their fusion is what communicates to his verse its peculiar colouring of hopeless longing. There is scarcely any poem of his which gives an impression of peace, of content; when earth and man are sad or wicked, heaven is beautiful, but far and doubtful; when earth is beautiful, it is not for him; while the sun shines for others, he is an exile, a stranger; and yet there is more regret than hope in his thought of death. Lermontov's German critic, Bodenstedt, cannot conceive how people could

[1] Best translations by Bodenstedt: "Poetischer Nachlass," 2 B. Berlin, 1852. Of Lermontov's prose: "A Hero of Our Own Times." London, 1854. "Choix de Nouvelles Russes." Translated by Chopin. Paris, 1853.

compare him with Poushkin, for just the points in which they differ determine the character of their respective merits. You remember Poushkin's complexity, his many-sidedness even in representing one feeling? Never does he linger over it; when he suffers alone, he goes into the crowd; when he suffers in the crowd, he consoles himself in solitude; there is a smile shining behind the most bitter of his tears; like a vigorous youth conscious of his resources, he shakes his trouble off, and seems to say: "Now, enough about it, and let us have a glass of sparkling wine." Lermontov refuses all consolation, his wounds are yawning, his sorrow stands open. And how deep they are! As if he had had the presentiment of the brevity of his earthly career, he seems to have intensified himself by condensing in these few years the supply of sensitiveness allotted for a whole life. "Early did I begin," he exclaims, "early shall I end." And in the meantime he does not spare himself, he gives all he can give; he consumes his heart; a Prometheus of poetry, he becomes his own vulture; he fans his inner flame, as if he wanted his entire soul to pass into poetry, that nothing but ashes should remain on the fatal day when the leaden ball should transpierce his heart. "Only in poetry was Lermontov himself," says the already mentioned German critic. Indeed, small of stature, uncomely, of an excessive sensitiveness, irritable, and susceptible, the young officer of the guards moved in the high circles of Petersburg society with a mask of scorn, of contempt, gloomy and absent, only now and then coming back to reality in a flash of sarcastic jesting full of bitterness and sting. But the effort to attain indifference was like a dam which prevented the

treasures of the poet's soul from flowing elsewhere than in the channel of verse. And the intensity of feeling in his poetry is such that it amply compensates for the relative uniformity of his mood, while his poetical forms, the vestments, if one may say so, in which he clothes his feelings, present a wonderful variety. His verse is not so strikingly natural as Poushkin's, it is not "spoken speech," art makes itself felt; yet he has found new metres, and obtained harmonies which even Poushkin does not possess. In his poem, the "Demon," where the angel of evil, exile from heaven, falls in love with a Caucasian girl, the iambic verse of "Eugene Oneguin" appears transfigured; none would recognize in the solemn harmony of the "Demon's" rhythmic texture the familiar, cheerful, and witty verse of Poushkin's novel.

The landscape in which Lermontov's poetry moves is, next to the richness of versification, one of its greatest charms. The beauty of his landscapes strangely contrasts with the sombre colouring of his feelings; his saddest verse is full of sun, of light, of flowers; the heavens are of a radiant blue in the songs of him who made the most wonderful translation of Byron's "My soul is dark." By introducing the scenery of the Crimea and the Caucasus into their poems, Lermontov and Poushkin widened the geographical limits of Russian poetry; it sang of the aurora borealis in the odes of Lomonossov, it now sings of vineyards, cypresses, the azure of skies seen through fragrant acacia flowers.[1] "Show me one book," says Boden-

[1] Those who cannot help adhering to the prevalent opinion of Russia being a land of everlasting snow and never melting ice, might have their ideas modified by the charming book of Vachon, "La Russie au soleil"

stedt, "among the mass of thick geographical, historical, and other works on the Caucasus, which would give one a better and more lively idea of the character of those mountains and their inhabitants, than any of Lermontov's "Caucasian Poems."

In this brief account of Lermontov's poetry we have dwelt on those sides of it in which it differs from, and consequently completes, that of Poushkin; its range seems relatively limited, yet its æsthetic worth is such as to raise Lermontov's name to the level of Poushkin's. Their individualities were not commensurable, but the excellence of their poetry is equal; Lermontov is not as many-chorded, but if added to Poushkin's lyre, his chords would not be out of tune, they would only introduce into the limpid harmony of his major tritone the melancholy of minor tones, and the hopeless bitterness of dissonances longing for resolution.

We must now say a few words on another poet of the thirties — Koltzoff (1809–1842). By introducing the elements of popular poetry into literature, he won a rank and glory of his own. Free of any literary influence, whether European or Russian, Koltzoff was altogether a self-made poet. Son of a merchant of Voronej, he had been taught only what was necessary for his father's trade, but a fanatical love for books, and especially for poetry, gave him no rest; the works of Joukovsky, Poushkin, Delvig, and others fell into his hands, and he also began to write. He did not — like others of the same pleiad — write much in his short career, — from 1834 till 1842. He died early, at thirty-three, yet his work is important. He was the first who

(Paris, 1886), if the descriptions Gogol and Tourgenieff give of Russian summers do not seem eloquent or reliable enough.

introduced popular speech into poetry; the first who made the peasant's language an instrument of art; who took the reality of the peasant's life as an object of fiction. With Koltzoff the peasant's soul breathes and sings in the highest regions of artistic creation; the place is given to it which it is going to keep throughout the subsequent development of Russian literature. Koltzoff has had many followers in poetry, but none of them has his charm of genuineness, his almost unconscious freshness. Nikitin[1] was much more literary, and mixed unæsthetic town-elements with rural scenes. Nekrassov,[2] even in his warmest poems of this style, remains an outsider, an observer. He speaks on behalf of the peasant; he constitutes himself his solicitor, whereas with Koltzoff it is the peasant himself who speaks through the poet. His pains, his joy, his love, all the events of his uncomplicated life in its continuous dependence upon earth and weather, appear in beautiful verse, which seems as naturally their expression as the odour is the natural emanation of the flower.[3]

Koltzoff is interesting in another sense. He is the first ,writer who does not belong to the aristocratic circles of St. Petersburg. All the writers of whom we have spoken, from Karamsin and Joukovsky on, belonged to that class; this had its influence on the general position of literary work and literature in society. Madame de Staël was not so wrong when she said that "in Russia a few noblemen are occupied with literature."[4] Poets and writers formed a sort of fellowship

[1] 1824–1861. [2] 1821–1877.

[3] On Koltzoff: W. R. S. Ralston, in Fortnightly Review, Sept. 15, 1866. [4] "Dix années d'exil."

with an Olympian exclusiveness, which had to be broken down by anyone who intended to devote himself to literature; there was no career possible without the consecration and recognition on the part of those who already had been recognized and consecrated. Koltzoff, in his remote provincial town, felt the attraction of the Olympian summits. Only after his visit to Petersburg, and his personal acquaintance with Poushkin and others, did the really valuable period of his career begin. But had he begun earlier, he would not have been able in these days to make his way without leaving his native town.[1] Aristocratism is the mark of the time, and not only in literature.

After the year 1825 we are no longer in the reign of Alexander I. The enlightened grandson of Catherine the Great, trained by the Swiss Laharpe in the atmosphere of French philosophy, had, as time went on, changed his ideas. After the wonderful epoch of 1812–1814, which brought forth the fall of Napoleon and the reintegration of Europe in its political frontiers; after the triumphs of the coalition and the splendours of the congresses,[2] Alexander gradually entered into a strain of abstract romantic religiousness, and ended his days plunged in mysticism under the influence of the well-known Mme. Krüdener,[3] and surrounded

[1] Nikitin seems to be the first poet who obtained public recognition without having ever moved from his birthplace, which by the way is the town of Voronej, where Koltzoff, also, was born (1806).

[2] On the Congress of Vienna: Cte d'Angeberg, "Le Congrès de Vienne et les traités de 1815." Paris, 1864. 4 vols. Cte de la Garde, "Fêtes et souvenirs du Congrès de Vienne." Brussels, 1843. On the epoch in general: Pertz, "Leben des Ministers Freiherrn von Stein."

[3] See Ch. Eynard, "Vie de Mme. de Krüdener." 2 vols. Paris, 1849. M. Buhler, "Frau von Kruedener auf dem Rappenhof, zur Heilbron und Schluchtern."

with champions, either of brutal militarism, like Count Arakcheyev, or of obscurantistic mistrust, like Shishkoff. In 1825 he was succeeded by his brother Nicholas I. The change of reign was marked by the outburst of the so-called "December Revolution." The best intellectual forces of the time took part in a movement, the chief aim of which was the emancipation of the serfs. But the time for this had not come yet, and those who used violence were suppressed by force.[1]

The reign of the Emperor Nicholas I belongs to that period of European history when concern for exterior politics decidedly overweighed interior interests.[2] The sovereigns of Europe seemed exclusively occupied in securing terms of good harmony among themselves, not because it was considered, as it is in our days, a condition of inner prosperity, but because it was a warrant of inner security. Sovereigns could not do without solidarity of action. They had cleared themselves from the intrusion of the Cæsar, but his memory was still alive; and the revolutionary spirit, fermenting all over the continent, burst out every now and then. Therefore, ties of dynastic solidarity were drawn as close as possible. On the basis of the Holy Alliance, in the programme of which the romantic idealism of Alexander I had been prudently counterbalanced by the indiscriminating practicality of the Austrian prime minister, Metternich, the sovereigns of this time also presented a sort of fellowship, the members of which,

[1] Count Leo Tolstoi took this epoch as subject for his novel, "The Decembrists," which unfortunately he did not carry further than three chapters.

[2] On Nicholas I: P. Lacroix, "Histoire de Nicolas I." 8 vols. Paris, 1864.

in spite of the differences of their position in their respective countries, were all occupied with one and the same idea — the preservation of the integrity of the legitimate European *status quo*. It was not destined to last long. The intrusion of another Napoleon was to trouble the harmony, and the trials of the Crimean War in 1853 were to prove that inner prosperity was at least as important a condition of a country's existence as exterior prestige. But in the thirties and forties, when European governments formed something like a cosmopolitan aristocratic association, all that was of inner interest, all that was purely national, seemed to possess a flavour of democracy which was not fitted to please.

Russian literature in the person of its authors had broken through the aristocratic exclusiveness of the upper classes. Though our writers had taken Russian life as an object of fiction, yet it was not life in its whole volume, it was visible life; they showed the front of it, they did not show the back; they made a picture, not a statue; you could not go round it. They had watched life in its results, not in its formation; they had busied themselves with flowers, not with roots; they had not yet touched the vital interests of the different social classes, their conditions, their relations; nor had they treated of those individual springs by which the vast mechanism of government operated upon society. Koltzoff, as we have seen, was the first representative of a new class among the writers; the first who introduced new elements into literature, but his work was not important enough to mark a new epoch; this honour belongs to another.

In the spring of 1831, a youth of twenty-two was

introduced to Poushkin; he had come from Little Russia two years before; he had entered as a clerk one of the departments of St. Petersburg, and was trying his pen in poetry and prose. This was the future author of "Taras Boulba" and the "Inspector." Gogol was received by the literary circles with open arms. The humble clerk who spent his forenoons in writing official papers at his department, and his afternoons in giving lessons in history, was seen in the evenings in the fashionable literary drawing-rooms of Prince Odoyevsky, of Prince Viazemsky, of the Empress's[1] maid-of-honour, the attractive and intelligent Mademoiselle Rossett.[2] In this atmosphere, under the encouraging influence of Joukovsky and Poushkin, did his talent ripen. Gogol was the last among the young writers who belonged to Poushkin's circle; Koltzoff, who had been to St. Petersburg only for a short visit in 1835 (and again, after Poushkin's death, in 1840), had been received into, but did not belong to, the circle.

With Gogol, literature in Russia ceased to be a monopoly of the drawing-room, and became the property of the nation; and it is from the time of Gogol on that Russian literature, ceasing to be the property of a single country, has become a possession of the world.

We have reached the period when Russian literature is known to everybody, or at any rate can be studied by anyone who may feel interested in it—so much has been translated in the last years.[3] This in

[1] The Empress Alexandra Theodorovna, wife of Nicholas I, sister of William I, Emperor of Germany.

[2] Memoirs of her daughter in "Nouvelle Revue." 1885, November and December.

[3] Henceforth we shall give no more bibliographical information as to translations; it would encumber the pages and almost force out the text.

some ways facilitates our task. You may easily conceive that to run through the literary work of such giants as Gogol, Tourgenieff, Dostoyevsky, and Tolstoi requires a little more time than we have at our disposal. Therefore we shall not examine so much their works as their place in the general evolution of Russian thought. We will look for their literary genealogy, their relationship to one another; we will consider the way they reflected or influenced contemporary life, the currents of thought of which they are representative. Thus we shall get a more or less complete picture of intellectual Russia from the end of the thirties till the beginning of the sixties; and at the close of our lectures, though I shall not have told you all about the modern writers of Russia, yet I shall at least possess the consciousness of having set before your eyes some sides of Russia's literary life which can hardly be gathered from the mere reading of our authors.[1]

It is believed by some critics that the Russian naturalistic school, the first representative of which is Gogol, had its founder in the person of Poushkin. This judgment diminishes the merit of the former and changes the character of that of the latter. Poushkin had a great influence on Gogol. You remember in what terms the young novelist deplored the poet's death, "All enjoyment of life, all my best enjoyment has vanished with him."

Poushkin brought light and order into the young writer's mind; he gave him the consciousness of his power, the tranquillity which is necessary for development of talent, and which it finds only in respect and

[1] On Russian literature in general: Reinholdt, "Geschichte der Russischen Literatur." Leipzig and Berlin, 1885.

acknowledgment by others. All this binds together the names of Gogol and Poushkin with indissoluble ties. Yet Gogol's dependence on Poushkin has a character of personal gratitude, not of literary descent; the poet influenced the novelist, but the novelist's work is not derived from the poet's work. The misunderstanding comes from the fact that Poushkin, as we have seen, was the first to have recourse to real life. Yet what a difference in the way of treating it! The poet, however realistic, never forgets to what school he belongs, and when he takes real life, it is not for itself, but in order to introduce it into romanticism. The novelist goes to real life and forgets that anything else exists. He boldly turns his back to any abstract world of poetry, and his beautiful language, the wonderful colours of his imagination, become nothing but means which appear the more luxuriant the sadder the naked poverty of the life he represents.

Do you wish to know in one word the new element introduced by Gogol? Before him life had been shown in literature. It had been shown in many of its varied aspects, and men had been made to feel in books as they feel in actual contact with life; they had felt pleased, grieved, proud, disgusted, but never before had they felt *ashamed* of life—this is what Gogol made them feel.

You must call to mind what has been said of the aristocratism of the time, to appreciate at its full value the importance of Gogol's appearance. Aristocratism was the official order of the day. Keeping in the movement, the writers got more and more secluded in their Olympian contemplation; no one thought of exploring the sad corners where life vegetated in the

miseries of servitude, roughness, ignorance, and superstition. After the softening breeze of sentimentalism, after the first blows of Poushkin's realism, society felt as if it had acquitted itself of all debts towards reality; it had given a look into life out of the enchanting window of romanticism; and now all doors closed again. Society was refined, cultured, more European than the Europeans themselves, and it relapsed into a feeling of rest like one who, having reached the top of the mountain, has nowhere else to go. As baggage from the valleys, they had taken with them a sort of theoretical love for the lower people, not because they were human beings, but because they represented in their eyes the living material which embodied the country,—the country with its greatness, its power, its European prestige; there was more patriotic selfishness than human sympathy in the way the lower people were cared for in those days. The system of maintaining the *status quo* carried out in diplomacy was applied to inner conditions. People were thoroughly persuaded that they lived in the best possible world, and indulged in a quiet, patriotic self-content. Under such conditions, Gogol's laughter suddenly broke out, and lifting the curtain from the most sombre corners of life he unveiled the reality in all its nakedness.

Before we speak of this laughter, let us take a look into the author's soul—it will save our explaining many things. The following is the famous passage beginning the seventh chapter of Gogol's "Dead Souls":—

"Happy the traveller who, after a long weary journey with its mud and dirt, with its sleepy station-keepers, with the tinkling of the bells, with its petty accidents, squabblings with coachmen, blacksmiths,

and all sorts of rascals, at last beholds the well-known roof of his home with its lights near at hand; and now he sees the familiar rooms, he hears the joyful cry greeting him, the noise and running of the children, and then the quiet appeasing speech interrupted with glowing kisses,—those kisses full of power to chase all memory of grief. Happy he who has a home, alas for him who has none!

"Happy the writer who, neglecting characters wearisome, disagreeable, sad in their reality, deals only with such as reveal the highest dignity of man; the writer who, out of the slough of his everyday surroundings, has selected the few mere exceptions; who has not once changed the exalted tone of his lyre; who from his height has never descended to his poorer brethren; and who, without touching earth, wholly dwells in the distant world of his glorified creations. Doubly enviable and beautiful his lot: he feels at home among them, and in the meantime, far and loud resounds his fame. With inebriating incense he has clouded people's sight; wonderfully has he flattered them; he has concealed the sadness of life, he has shown them man under a fair aspect. All are applauding and running and flying after his triumphant chariot. A great poet they call him, the poet of the earth, who soars high above all others as does the eagle above all those who soar in the heights of heaven. At his mere name young ardent hearts palpitate with ecstasy; responsive tears glisten in all eyes. None is equal to him in power.

"Not such is the lot, and different is the destiny, of the writer who has ventured to call to the surface all which passes unseen by indifferent eyes; the dreadful mire of petty vanities in which our life is sunk, those cold

every-day characters that swarm on our painful, weary, earthy, road; the writer who, with the powerful force of his inexorable chisel, has dared to expose them in their sharp relief. He shall not reap his nation's applause, he shall not see the grateful tears and unanimous transport of enraptured souls; the young girl in an outburst of heroic enthusiasm will not fly towards him with glowing heart; to him shall not be given the enchantment of hearing cheers roused by his own words; and he shall not escape the verdict of the contemporary tribunal, — that hypocritical, insensible, tribunal which will proclaim as mean and base his cherished creations, which will assign him a contemptible place among the offenders against humanity, which will endow him with the qualities of his own personages, refuse to him heart and soul and the sacred flame of talent. For the contemporary tribunal will not acknowledge that the glasses which disclose the movements of invisible insects are as wonderful as those which reveal the heavens; for the contemporary tribunal will not acknowledge that great depth of feeling is needed to draw a picture from the slough of life so as to make it a masterpiece of creative art; the contemporary tribunal will not acknowledge that sublime enraptured laughter is equal to sublime lyrical enthusiasm, and that an abyss lies between it and the grinnings of a clown. No, the contemporary tribunal will not acknowledge him; all will turn with insult and reproach against the repudiated writer: with no sympathy, no response, no interest, as a homeless traveller shall he be abandoned in the middle of the road. Harsh is his destiny, and bitterly shall he feel his loneliness."

Everything is contained in this beautiful fragment.

The loneliness of the man who never knew the joys of family life except in days of early childhood; the pain of the satirist who stands alone among the Parnassian poets of his time; the sufferings of him who thinks he is misunderstood by contemporaries, and does not realize that he is anticipating the future; the unrealizable dreams of changing his style, and of becoming one of those who tune their lyre to "exalted tones"; the inner discord of him who shall, in later days, disavow all he has written in the days of his glory;[1] the fluctuation of his soul consumed in agonizing struggles between the writer and the pietist; all the torments of that unbalanced life which began in the rural remoteness of Little Russia, flourished in the literary drawing-rooms of the capital, continued in melancholy wanderings through Europe, and, after a disenchanting pilgrimage to Jerusalem, ended in Moscow, atrophied in physical disease and mental sterility.

In 1831, the "Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka"[2] appeared. "I have been told," writes Poushkin, "that when the editor entered the printing-office, he found the compositors bursting with laughter. I congratulate the public upon a really amusing book."

Gogol's laughter had several stages. During the first years of his stay in Petersburg, among the misty streets of the northern town, the flowery prairies of his beloved Little Russia lived on in his memory with all the radiant luxury of their summers. His descriptions of peasant and Cossack life are imbued with a feeling of endless devotion, his humour is tender, his jokes

[1] "Selections from the correspondence with friends."

[2] Dikanka is the name of a village in Little Russia, in the province of Poltava, belonging to Prince Kochoubey.

sparkle on a background of love, his gayety is of an almost childish purity — not a drop of bitterness, not a single "invisible tear" behind that "visible laughter." In the next three years the town element makes irruption into his idyllic strain of rural optimism; muddy pavements, dirty apartments, poor clerks, artists and writers succumbing in the dumb tragedy of the struggle for life, invade some of his novels[1] and introduce an element of disenchantment into other of his writings, where Little Russian life still appears in all its picturesqueness yet filled with petty every-day details,[2] or with epic pictures of human sufferings.[3] Now, tears ooze through his jokes; bitterness glides into his heart — the decomposition of his optimistic visions has begun. Soon, beauty will impress him only by the outrages it endures from human villany; the world will appear to him in that aspect of degradation, legalized by the monstrous indifference of modern society, into which woman is precipitated by poverty and misery. "What has the power of filling us with greater compassion," he exclaims, "than to see beauty touched by the pestilential breath of corruption." Beauty of life by and by fades away, and reveals ulcers and wounds. Yet he cannot change his pen; the man suffers, the writer laughs — only with the difference that till then he had been writing in order to make people laugh, now he writes in order to laugh at them.

The "Inspector," represented for the first time in April, 1836, unfolds a pitiful picture of small govern-

[1] "The Portrait," "The Nevsky Avenue," "The Cloak," and others.

[2] "Old Fashioned Farmers," "The Story about Ivanovich and Ivan Nikoforovich," and others.

[3] "Taras Boulba."

mental functionaries vegetating in provincial remoteness, and sunk into venality and bribery. The "Dead Souls," which appeared in 1842, unrolls the distant horizons of Russian country life before the emancipation of the serfs, with its endless variety of types, in the endless monotony of interests concentrated on material gain and provincial gossip.

"And not a single honest character!" people were heard exclaiming as they left the theatre after the first performance of the "Inspector." "No," said the author, "but there was one honest thing in the play during the whole performance — and that honest thing was — laughter."[1]

"How is it possible," foreigners sometimes ask, "that such a play as the 'Inspector' should be permitted on the stage in Russia?" The fact that it was permitted under the Emperor Nicholas I is astonishing indeed; yet it was by a special order of the Emperor himself, who took a personal interest in the play, that the "Inspector" was put on the stage. The fact that it has never since been taken off the boards astonishes no Russian; the astonishment of foreigners is comprehensible; they evidently judge by the pitiless mutilations the Russian play had to endure from the scissors of the German manager, when, overcoming his hesitations, he at last accepted it for the imperial stage in Berlin about a year ago.[2]

[1] In the "Departure from the Theatre." A critical essay in dramatic form, where the author sums up the different opinions of contemporary criticism.

[2] "Correspondence from Berlin," 19th of April (in the "New Time" of St. Petersburg, 21st of April, 1895), by M. Shabelsky, the translator of Gogol's comedy.

Another remark from the lips of foreigners is more important. "What a picture of Russia one obtains from Gogol's 'Inspector' and 'Dead Souls'! How dreadful! Not a single honest character!" Pardon me for being harsh, yet I cannot help calling such a judgment a revelation of great lack of literary sense. In what country, I will ask you, in what times, and in what literature, has a satire ever been accepted as an adequate picture of life in its whole extent? Why then, is it because so little is known about Russia, that the saddest corners of life are to be taken as an average picture? And is one of the greatest satirists of the world, endowed with the most powerful gift of abstraction, to be reduced to the level of a simple newspaper reporter who merely registers facts? No, let us not abase the writer by underrating the magnifying power of his insight into the realities of life. And let us not traduce a nation for having been the object of such a satire; the very nation which was satirized, produced the satirist. The critical literature of a country does not lie outside the national soul; it is an element —and a noble element—of its self-consciousness. If a nation is made responsible for the ugliness of its deficiencies, it must be made responsible for the vigour of its consciousness of them. A great satirist, just as a great poet, is a product of a nation's evolution, and whatever he uncovers in the depths of human misery, his work, as the poet's work, stands to the credit of the nation. Only great souls are capable of turning all the powers of their intellect against themselves. Only a nation whose soul is steeled for painful struggles of self-improvement, could have turned against itself such a venomous sting as the sublime satire of Gogol.

With Gogol disappeared the last representative of literature who, by his personal relations, gravitated toward the past, the last of the youthful pleiad; the names which now are about to dawn, gravitate toward the future; they are to form the second pleiad, whose activity chiefly belongs to the sixties, and their last representatives in our days are Leo Tolstoi in prose, Maykov and Polonsky in poetry.[1]

The decade which lies between Gogol's "Dead Souls" and the first appearance of Leo Tolstoi marks an important moment in our intellectual life. As the intellectual tendencies of the time were chiefly accentuated from 1840 on, the whole epoch has received the appellation of this date. "The forties" in Russia is a word which has a charm of its own; it possesses an uplifting power which raises one to idealistic regions of scientific, literary, and philosophical discussions, somewhat abstract in their youthful enthusiasm, yet of a great practical value because of their sincerity and purity of aim.

The University of Moscow in the thirties had become the centre of an intense intellectual activity. Seldom has a body of professors and students exhibited such a simultaneous outburst of scientific interests. German philosophy becomes the chief object of study and discussion. Young minds, inflamed by the doctrines of Schelling, were carried away by the lectures of Professors Nadejdin,[2] Pavlov,[3] Shevy-

[1] The chief representatives of the second pleiads of our lyrical poets are: Tutchev (d. 1873), Count Alexis Tolstoi (d. 1875), Fet (d. 1892), and the yet living Count Koutousov.

[2] Professor of fine arts and archæology.

[3] Professor of physics and agriculture.

rioff,[1] and Pogodin.[2] Around these names spring up other names, of those who, yet students, are to become in the next decade the leaders of Russian thought; those who shall prepare the literary soil from which the great writers of the sixties are to rise, and who constitute the moral atmosphere of the society which, twenty years later, will respond to the sovereign call of Emperor Alexander II for the emancipation of the serfs. Among these names the most important are: Granovsky, the future professor of history, who exercised such an influence on his own and the next generation that his name became synonymous with an epoch. Belinsky, the future critic whom we have so often quoted, especially when speaking of Poushkin, and who, it has been said, "constitutes the chief channel of our literary and social development in the forties."[3] Solovieff, since 1845 professor of Russian history at the University of Moscow, one of the greatest of historians.[4] The brothers Aksakov,

[1] Professor of literature. We cited him when speaking of the "Annals," and of the "Word about Igor's Fights." A characteristic remark was suggested to Goethe ("Kunst und Altertum") by Shevyrioff's examination of the second part of "Faust": "The Scotchman endeavours to penetrate into a work; the French, to understand it; the Russian, to assimilate it. Thus Mr. Carlyle, Mr. Ampère, and Mr. Shevyrioff have undesignedly presented these various methods of dealing with a work of art or nature." A. Barsonkoff, "Life and Works of M. P. Pogodin." 3 vols. St. Petersburg, 1889–1891 (Russian). Compare, Goethe to Carlyle, Letter XIV, 15th June, 1828. ("Correspondence between Goethe and Carlyle," edited by C. E. Norton, London, 1887.)

[2] Professor of history.

[3] A. N. Pypin, "Characteristics of Literary Opinions from the Twenties to the Forties." St. Petersburg, 1890 (Russian).

[4] His "History of Russia from the Earliest Times" is the capital work on the matter. Volume xxix brings it as far as the reign of Catherine the Great (1780).

the future leaders of the Slavophiles, sons of a well-known writer, Serge Aksakov.[1]

All these young people lived in a state of philosophical intoxication. After the last years of the thirties, it was no longer Schelling but Hegel who was inflaming imaginations and unchaining discussion. "In the three parts of his 'Logic,'" says a contemporary, "in the two of his 'Æsthetic,' in his 'Cyclopædia,' there was not one paragraph which had not been conquered at the cost of desperate discussion of many a night. People who were friends parted for weeks because they did not agree upon the determination of the 'absolute *ego*,' and its 'existence as such.' The most trifling pamphlets published in Berlin, or in any centre of German philosophy where Hegel was spoken of, were read till they were soiled and worn out." Enthusiasm for poetry was not less. "To know Goethe by heart, especially the second part of 'Faust,' was as compulsory as to wear clothes. The philosophy of music stood on the first plane." Their interest in abstractions made their idealism almost ridiculous. "A man who went out for a walk in the park was going out in order to enjoy the pantheistic feeling of unity with the cosmos; if he met a soldier or a loquacious woman of the people, the philosopher did not simply enter into conversation with them—he determined the national substance in its immediate or accidental

[1] 1791–1859. His "Family Chronicle" ("Russische Familien Chronik." 2 B. Leipzig, 1858) is the prototype of the Russian family novel, and with his books on fishing and shooting, he gives the first samples of the genuine and loving contemplation of nature which afterwards became the characteristic feature of Tourgenieff; but, as they bear an autobiographical character, they have not attained in fiction the rank they might occupy for their literary merit.

appearance."[1] All this was childish in its exaggeration, yet sincere and unselfish. With age came steadiness and practical sense; former students became professors, enthusiastic idealists, zealous workers of science and enlightenment.[2] Out of these names let us take the one which has been designated as "the chief channel of our literary and social development in the forties."

From the numerous quotations I have given, the figure of Belinsky must in some way already have delineated itself before your minds: you certainly must have appreciated the subtlety of his artistic perception, the precision of his analysis, the penetrating power of his insight, the elevated standard of his æsthetic judgment. His influence was of incalculable importance; we may say that the whole subsequent generation of writers, of those who established the universal significance of Russian literature, gathered their æsthetic education from Belinsky's works. If we consider the importance of those writers on whom he exercised his power, — Poushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, — and if we remember that he was their contemporary, and consequently not possessing the privilege of retrospective judgment, his insight into the sense of literary events and their relationship to life appears almost wonderful. Never did a theory once held cloud the serenity of his appreciation. "Only he who does not care for truth has never changed opinion," he used to say.

[1] Quoted by A. N. Pypin, op. cit.

[2] One of the first who gave the impulse to the new philosophical movement, was the young poet Venevitinov (1805–1827). Extraordinarily gifted, he had become a leader in spite of his youth (he died at twenty-two). "How could you have let him die?" wrote Poushkin to his friends.

And so true indeed is his appreciation of life and art in their reciprocal influence that it really becomes hard to decide whether it is advice to contemporary writers, or a prophecy on the future Russian literature, when he says: "The politico-economist, arming himself with statistics, impresses the minds of his readers or listeners and *proves* that the conditions of a social class have improved or declined for one reason or another. The poet impresses the reader's imagination with his brilliant pictures of actuality, and *shows* in a true reproduction that the conditions of a social class have improved or become worse for one reason or another. The scientist proves, the poet shows, and both persuade; the one by way of logical arguments, the other by way of images. Yet the former is heard and understood by a few, the latter by all."

Belinsky's activity as a publicist was of great importance. "On him," says an above-quoted writer, "were concentrated the warm sympathy of the new generations, the most violent hatred of the old literary parties, and the antipathy of the new school hostile to the 'western' tendency." What is this "new school," and what this "western tendency"? A contemporary thus characterizes them: "In these days the Moscovite scientists and writers were divided into two groups: the so-called 'Westernists,' and the so-called Slavophiles. The former, the more numerous, gathered round the young professors newly returned home from abroad, and presented a reflection of moderate Hegelianism. The latter were elaborating an orthodox Russian system."[1] That which the contemporary calls "two

[1] G. Samarin (d. 1876), himself a Slavophile; later, a member of the commission which elaborated the plans for the emancipation of the serfs.

groups," soon became two camps, and Belinsky, when hostilities grew sharp, became the most zealous champion of the so-called "Westernism." The Westernists were no regular party: they were, however, treated as such by their adversaries, the Slavophiles, from whom they also received their appellation. As they had no characteristic features which distinguished them from the champions of culture in any country, we will give a sketch of the adverse party, and thus exhibit the differences.

We mentioned some characteristic points of the Slavophiles' doctrine, if you remember, when speaking of the different judgments of Peter the Great. You remember that the reform was considered by this party as a violent interference with the normal development of the country, as a deviation leading to a pernicious imitation of Western Europe. Such a view of one of the greatest moments of Russian history was the natural consequence of a whole doctrinal system. In spite of the national exclusiveness to which it leads, in spite of the artistic intolerance into which it degenerated in later days, in spite of the self-confident "spread-eagle-ism" as you would say, which is its frequent companion, Slavophilism rests upon a profoundly scientific basis; the founders of the doctrine were enlightened men, who stood on a high level of European culture.[1] Strange to say, those champions of nationalism, advocates of the superiority of the Greco-Slavonian world over the Latino-German, grounded their theories on the acquisitions of that very western culture which they contested. After all it was an intensified form of the

[1] See the impression produced on Mackenzie Wallace by the representatives of the party in the seventies. ("Russia," vol. ii, chap. xxvi.)

doctrine of the historical succession of nations which had lately been advanced by Schelling and turned to the benefit of the Germans by Hegel. Only with this difference, that what in the Germans was condemned as national conceit, because it stood on a purely rationalistic basis without any religious element, being transplanted to Russian ground, was set up as a mark of Christian humility. True it was, that, according to their teaching, providence had granted especially superior gifts to the Russian people above other nations, and such dogmatic indisputability did this theory possess in their eyes, in such sincerity of faith did they profess it, that there actually seems to be as much submission and humility in their belief as conceit or pride.[1] We will not linger over the particulars of the Slavophile doctrine,—the scorn of Europe, the antipathy for Peter the Great, and the whole Petersburg period of our history, the hatred of Rome and the Latin Catholicism—all these negative elements were ridiculous and sterile; but there was a good element, an element of love in the system, and this was fruitful and valuable in its results.

The lower classes of the people, as having escaped the "pernicious influence of corrupting civilization," appeared to them still to exhibit the primitive national purity. It was an exaggerated idealization, yet its

[1] However contradictory it may sound, they assert Russia's greatness, but they assert it in humility. "We are great," they seem to say, "because we are humble." "Russian humility" becomes a favourite theme (C. Aksakov, Shevyrioff). The sin of conceit in them is immediately followed by the merit of humility; yet the consciousness of this merit does but aggravate the original sin. Thus in its most accentuated form (C. Aksakov), Slavophilism presents a vacillation between national pride and Christian humility, with no reconciliation possible.

practical results were beneficent. All these scientists and writers had turned their intellectual resources to the study of the people, each one in his own field. Kireyevsky studied and collected specimens of Russian folk-lore; the poet Homiakoff studied history and ethnography — his researches on the conditions of the peasantry helped to elucidate the great question of the emancipation of the serfs; Shevyrioff[1] gave a beautiful examination of ancient popular poetry and chronicles; Valouyev, Pogodin,[2] and others made valuable researches in national history. Their conscientiousness and devotion to science assign to them a noble place among the workers of the country, and whatever posterity may think of their opinions, it reveres the high qualities of their character and registers their scientific merits with gratitude.[3]

In these — their works in behalf of Russian science — the Slavophiles co-operated with their adversaries, those whom they had surnamed "Westernists." Both these parties preserved amidst divergency of opinions the enthusiastic love for science which had animated

[1] Shevyrioff seems to have been the first to employ the expression "rotten West." By a strange force of combination this did not cloud the clearness of his scientific sight; he made valuable parallel studies of Russian *and universal* literature, and he could not help appreciating at its just value the remark of Goethe. (See foot-note, p. 228.)

[2] Pogodin, like Shevyrioff, did not call himself a Slavophile, yet the tendency of his paper, the *Moscovian*, did not differ much from the Slavophile ideas. He belongs to a group which later received the appellation of "soilers" (see p. 262). In science, Pogodin is known for having applied to Russian history what he called the "mathematical method."

[3] This of course concerns only those works in which the impartiality of the scientist is not affected by the predilections of the Slavophile. The idealistic picture which C. Aksakov gives of the paganism of the ancient Slavonians has no place in science.

young minds in their student days when opinions had not yet differentiated. An outburst of scientific activity was displayed by numbers of professors and writers, who, with incredible energy, in ten or fifteen years raised historiography and philology in Russia to the level on which they stood in Western Europe. Such names as Oustrialov, Solovieff, Kaveline, Kostomarov, Bestoujev-Rumin,[1] Bouslayev,[2] Sreznevsky,[3] are revered for services rendered to science, and not only for having worked to the glory of science in Russia.[4] It is no longer the personal influence of one or another German or French scientist, it is the contact with the whole gigantic bulk of universal science which sets in movement the intellectual forces of the country, a movement in which European scientific celebrities, such as Ranke, Grimm, Niebuhr, Bopp, have not so much the significance of special teachers, as that of standard-bearers designating tendencies and methods.

[1] Historians. An honourable mention is due to their predecessor, Kachenovsky (1775–1842), who first vindicated the right of existence for "historical doubt." He was severe towards his predecessors. Karamsin, with his patriotic rhetoric, was harshly criticised by him for having proclaimed in the introduction to his "History" that "knowledge of all the laws in the world — a German erudition, a wit like that of Voltaire, even a profoundness like that of Machiavelli — will not help a historian if he has not the talent of *picturing* events." (It is an amusing detail that in the French translation the words "vast erudition" are substituted for "German erudition.")

[2] Historical studies of Slavonic and Russian languages. [3] Slavist.

[4] We speak only of history and literature, but we might mention many a name in other branches, such as: Struve in astronomy, Redkin in law, Pirogoff in medicine, Mendeleyev in chemistry, Lobachevsky in mathematics. (On Lobachevsky, see the "Address by Professor Vassiliev," translated by Dr. G. B. Halstedt, Austin, Texas, 1894; see also his "Geometrical Researches on the Theory of Parallels," translated by the same (4th edition).

Societies like the Archæographical (1834), Archæological (1846), Geographical (1846), Imperial Historical (1867, with over ninety volumes of publications), spring up in the two capitals; similar institutions are annexed to universities in other towns.[1]

True to the precept of Belinsky, literature marches hand in hand with science. Tourgenieff, Dostoyevsky, Tolstoi, Goncharoff, and others of the young naturalistic school also unveil the country and its people. They formulate the best ideals and strivings of their contemporaries, point them out, and impose them upon society. National self-consciousness thus attained its final crystallization. The Crimean War, in 1853–1856, gave a blow to national conceit, but roused all hearts for the internal struggles of social and economical improvement. Nicholas I was succeeded by the Emperor Alexander II in 1855, and with him dawned the emancipation of the serfs. Hope and the consciousness of power kept the minds of men in a state of enthusiastic expectation. A breath of youthfulness breathes in the air. With the idealistic responsiveness of the "forties" in their hearts, the generation was ready to answer the monarch's call. In March, 1856, in an allocution to the representatives of Moscow, the Emperor's voice announced the abolition of servitude in Russia. On the 19th of February, 1861, the emancipation was proclaimed.

[1] The Imperial Society for the Study of Nature in Moscow. The Moscow Society of History and Antiquities. The Warsaw Fine Arts Society. The Historical Nestor Society. The Imperial Society of History and Antiquity in Odessa; and others.

LECTURE VIII

(1861–1896)

The "sixties." Alexander II and the emancipation of the serfs. Servitude in United States and Russia. Moral significance of the reform. The rôle of literature. The three chief representatives of the naturalistic school.

Tourgenieff — the thinker overweighed by the artist. Russian critique of the sixties. Tourgenieff's "Fathers and Sons." Nihilism.

Dostoyevsky — the artist overweighed by the thinker. Dostoyevsky's influence on his generation. Tourgenieff and Dostoyevsky. Dostoyevsky's teachings from the universal and the national point of view.

Leo Tolstoi — the artist and the thinker in rivalry. Artistic power. Tolstoi's teachings. Spirit of dismemberment. "Tolstoists." Influence of his teaching — its negative character. Societies and individuals.

LECTURE VIII

(1861–1896)

. . . and on the throne
Do not forget the highest title — man.
— JOUKOVSKY (to Alexander II).

MAN *is a greater name than President or King.*
— CHANNING.

THE "sixties" in Russia, like the "forties," is a date which marks an epoch. Yet so rapid was the growth of the country in those twenty years, that the uplifting spirit which characterizes the "forties" appears almost child's play compared to the great movement which carried away the generation of the "sixties." The "forties" were the product of a few, the result of the private activity of a group; the "sixties" are the result of a universal activity, the product of a co-operation of the government and society controlled by the imperative will of the supreme power. It is no longer a few individuals now, — the whole country in the persons of its most enlightened representatives determines the character of an epoch which is marked by such reforms as the emancipation of the serfs, the institution of provincial self-government, and the establishment of a new system of judicial proceedings.[1] The enthusiastic response of the

[1] "Code d'organisation judiciaire de l'Empire de Russie de 1864," trad. et annoté par le Cte J. Kapnist. Paris, 1893.

best forces of the country to the call of the sovereign makes of this time one of the finest pages of our history, and the name of Alexander II will always illuminate it with the radiant splendour of his noble character and the converging beams of his nation's gratitude.[1] We will endeavour in this our last lecture to picture the spirit of that time.

He who wants to study the present state of Russia cannot do so without tracing things back to the "sixties," for here lies not only the origin, but the direction of the subsequent social and intellectual development. The forms into which the present society has settled, the respective situation of social classes, the ways opened for individual improvement, Russian science as it stands in our days, and Russian literature as it represents contemporary life, — are all the result of that period of our history.

Opinions do not agree in their judgment of the period. The "sixties" were and are still much criticised. The liberal tendencies of the time, it is said, had unbridled imaginations and called into activity the worst elements of the country; the revolutionary outburst at the end of the "seventies" is interpreted as the natural evolution of the same spirit which brought forth the above-mentioned reforms. The tragic end of Alexander II is regarded by some as an expiation. It is not our object to judge; besides, events are too near and memories too fresh; it will require time before people acquire the serenity necessary for a retrospective judgment. Yet one thing stands indisputable: the party which, professing principles of brotherhood, terrorized the world by using dynamite, committed the

[1] See C. Cardonne, "L'Empereur Alexandre II." Paris, 1883.

greatest of its crimes by killing him who had used his autocratic power for restoring the rights of human dignity to twenty-two millions of human beings.

However great the act of Alexander II may appear from the universal point of view, it appears still greater if we consider the place it occupies in our national history. "Servitude in Russia," says one of our writers, "had a universal significance. It determined all conditions of existence, from the most important to the most insignificant. It was a drag which absolutely hindered the country's development. No progress of institutions, no accumulation of national wealth, no spreading of learning in the masses, no improvement of family relations, of education, customs, notions, in a word, no improvement of any kind was possible so long as servitude existed."[1] You may see from this the character of the reform and its importance; if the disease was of a "universal significance," its removal must have had the same significance, and must have also made itself felt, in "all conditions of life from the most important to the most insignificant."

The emancipation of the serfs in Russia has often been compared with the emancipation of the negroes in the United States; the two acts are comparable indeed from the humanitarian point of view; yet if we consider the local conditions and the national significance of the two emancipations in their respective countries, we shall see that they essentially differ. In America the slave was imported from another continent, he belonged to another race, he was no organic element of the great national body,—and slavery in the

[1] I. Ivanukoff, "The Fall of Servitude in Russia." St. Petersburg, 1882 (Russian).

United States had an imported character; it was not a disease, it was an excrescence; it wanted not so much healing as amputation; political life might have gone on even with slavery, for in America slavery was a commercial institution and not an historical result. Not so in Russia. Though during the first seven hundred years of her existence, Russia knew no servitude, though the first official act binding the peasant to the soil dates from 1597, yet so deeply did the disease penetrate into the people's consciousness that three hundred years later it seemed an organic part of the nation's body almost impossible to be removed without compromising the political existence of the country.[1]

The institution of servitude in Russia had been an act of political economy resulting from military needs. In ancient times the army was supplied by the landed proprietors, to whom land was given by the grand dukes, under the condition that at the first call they should appear equipped for war at the head of a detachment recruited among the peasants cultivating their estates; but as the peasants, being free to pass from one proprietor to another, deserted to those who paid the most, the poorer landowners were soon unable to keep their engagements towards the government. As a consequence, in 1597, a decree was issued by Boris Godounoff binding the peasant to the soil which he cultivated. "The bondage of the peasants," says Solovioff,

[1] The appearance of servitude at a comparatively late period of Russian history has often been regarded as proving that servitude was not inherent to the national constitution. Some historians even put it in connection with the beginning of foreign influence, and this is one of the chief arguments of the national party against Peter's reform and the "western tendencies." (For instance: Kayalovich, "History of Russian Self-consciousness." St. Petersburg, 1884.)

"is a desperate resort of a country which feels itself to be in a state of helpless economical distress."[1] From the bondage of the worker to the land there was but a step to his becoming a bondman to the landowner; such he became and such he remained throughout the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. The military system by degrees became modified, a regular conscription was introduced by Peter the Great, but the situation of the peasant remained unaltered. Legislation made several attempts at improving his condition, — they were paralyzed by customs and opinions according to which the peasant was regarded as movable property. No measures for improvement could be taken, — the principle had to be rooted out. During three hundred years society suffered from this condition as from a disease, and, except for a few individual protests,[2] people seemed scarcely conscious of the moral anomaly in which they lived. The moment to put an end to it came at last.

When the Emperor's voice proclaimed the abolition of servitude, all that was noble and vigorous in the nation rose like one man, and proved that it was ready to assume the responsibility of one of the greatest acts in human history. For four years did the preparatory commissions work at the elaboration of the plan.[3] During these four years twenty-two millions of human

[1] "Public Lectures on Peter the Great" (Russian).

[2] Among these, Radischev, who in his "Journey from Petersburg to Moscow" (1790), gives pictures of contemporary peasant life of a most striking realism; then, the "Decembrists"; Poushkin in one of his poems expresses the wish to see "the chains of slavery fall at the sign of the sovereign's hand."

[3] See A. Leroy-Beaulieu, "Un homme d'état russe" in "Revue des Deux Mondes," October, 1880.

beings were expecting the decision of their fate.[1] "I cannot admire and rejoice enough," said the Emperor, on the 28th of January, 1861, when handing over to the Imperial Council the project elaborated by the commission,[2] "I cannot rejoice enough, and I am sure you all rejoice at the confidence and patience shown by our dear people on this occasion." They had not to wait long. According to the Emperor's special desire, the proceedings had to be accomplished in the first part of February so that the law should be put into effect before the beginning of the summer labours.

On the 19th of February the manifesto proclaiming the emancipation of the serfs was signed by Alexander II; on the 5th of March it was read in the churches of both capitals;[3] in the first days of April it was already known in all the corners of the Empire. That the peasants were not only emancipated but endowed with land, and that the reform did not cost the country a drop of blood, are two important points by which the abolition of servitude in Russia differs from the same act in other countries. The emancipation in Russia was an act of practical life, not only of theoretical satisfaction, for the emancipated peasant not only received the right of liberty, but the faculty of being free, freedom being but an empty sound if not war-

[1] The total number of the peasants at the moment of emancipation was 21,625,609.

[2] The so-called "Committee of Redaction," who were entrusted with the final wording of the plan, worked during nineteen months, in which time they had altogether 409 sittings.

[3] The spirit in which the people accepted the reform appears from the fact that on this day the bars and saloons were almost empty. The same condition of things was noted in all points of the Empire on the days when the decree of emancipation was read.

ranted by property. This is why the labour question, which in our end of the century seems to have attained its most violent phase in the states of Western Europe, where millions of human beings cannot exist unless they renounce their freedom, will not arise in Russia for centuries to come. And Russia will not regret standing behind the rest of Europe in this case; she simply expects that when the hour of her labour crisis comes, the advanced countries of the world will already have shown her the way of solving the problem.

No words can give an idea of the enthusiasm which inflamed the minds of men in these years. "There are epochs," says a contemporary, "when every man feels the presence of Providence in life, when in the depth of his soul he distinctly hears the present time answering the demands of the past, and these answers bring peace and good-will to human hearts; they reconstitute the sense, the truth, and the equilibrium of life,—epochs when forces suddenly revive and mature, when people with an intensified pulsation of the heart join in common work and common feeling. Blessed the generations which are destined to live in such times! Thank God we are permitted to live in such a time!"[1] This feeling of community was the great force which helped the workers of this time to triumph over the incertitudes of those who were afraid of the economical and political difficulties presented by the reform; the conservative element was strong, but its resistance was overcome by the unanimous outburst of the best forces of the country. It is a remarkable fact, well worthy of notice, that during all these years when di-

[1] M. Katkoff. Speech pronounced at the banquet given in Moscow on the 28th of December, 1857.

vergency of opinions in society and official circles filled the air with stormy discussions, the whole press presented a concordance of opinion which has never since been displayed in regard to any political or economical question; only one periodical pronounced itself not in favour of the emancipation, but of a "gradual improvement of the peasants' conditions";[1] all the other organs of the press expressed liberal tendencies, and with their commentaries helped public opinion to accept the reform, and to appreciate its significance.

We can hardly, in our day, form an idea of the change the emancipation wrought in the social aspect of the country. Seldom has a reform exercised such a destructive, annihilating action on that which it condemned. When we now see the peasant taking part in the assembly of the provincial self-government with the same rights of vote and election as his former proprietor, who sits next to him without a vestige of antagonism, how can we reconstitute in our mind those times when he was regarded as a thing to be bought or sold? Thirty-five years have passed, and servitude seems almost relegated into legendary times; those who saw it remember; the second generation scarcely understands; the third will not even be able to imagine. No educational efforts of any school, of any preacher, of any propaganda, could have ever obtained so radical a regeneration of the nation's soul, as the penstroke by which Alexander II signed the memorable act of the 19th of February.[2] This is what the monarch meant, when in the above-mentioned allocution to the Imperial Council, he said: "Servitude in Russia was established by the

[1] The "Farmer's Magazine," the first number. Moscow, April, 1858.

[2] The pen is preserved in the Historical Museum in Moscow.

autocratical power, and the autocratical power only can suppress it." The Emperor, in these words, did not doubt his country, the best portion of which showed itself to be ready for the acceptance of the reform; but he felt that years would be needed to bring the great masses to the same point by way of education. As it was carried out, the reform was imposed on the masses, and one generation sufficed to lift them up to the level of its conscious acceptance; the reform was by itself the means of education.

It is not our object to consider the economical and agrarian conditions which resulted from the emancipation; we will endeavour to follow up its influence on the tendencies of Russian thought so far as they expressed themselves in literature.

We have seen that long before the emancipation, scientific interest in national questions had been stirred up. Literature moved in the same direction; as early as the forties, its best representatives introduced the peasant into fiction, and thus worked at the levelling of the social barriers which prevent the free contact of human souls.[1] Lack of time will prevent us from embracing the whole bulk of Russian contemporary literature, but we will examine by what means the three great representatives of the naturalistic school have sought to accomplish the task. Tourgenieff, Dostoyevsky, and Count Tolstoi, all three, pursue the unveiling of the human soul, though each by a different way; the two latter differ from each other so much the more as

[1] Contrary to the prevailing opinion, it is not Tourgenieff but Grigorovich who first introduced the peasant in the novel ("Anton the Miserable," 1846). "He was the literary Columbus of the peasant," says a critic. "Tourgenieff became his Americo Vespucci." (Skabichevsky.)

both have carried their opinions to the last limits of exaggeration.

Tourgenieff, the refined "Westernist," arms himself with all the resources of an aristocratic education, and lighting his way with the lamp of European culture, plunges into the unexplored depths of the peasant life. He uncovers the beauties of the human soul under the picturesque roughness of its surroundings, and the identity of feeling in his and the peasant's heart, with the power of responsiveness and sympathy in both, appear like a warrant of a distant yet inevitable fusion of all elements of human life from the heights of civilization down to the depths of the popular soul.

Dostoyevsky, the sombre epileptic, disenchanted with "civilization," disgusted with the upper classes and all that comes from Europe, preaches individual self-oblivion; he goes to the outcasts of society; among murderers, convicts, and disreputable women, he discovers jewels of moral beauty, and, in an act of mystic veneration, he kneels down before the collective soul of the Russian lower people, as the only true remnant of Christian humility, predestined by Providence to regenerate the world.

Just the contrary, Leo Tolstoi, reviling all civilization, undermining all authority, the self-made philosopher, shakes off all historical inheritance, every principle of collectivity in human life; throwing down national, political, and social barriers, he abandons man to his individual self-improvement; knowing no limits in his work of emancipation, he finally breaks family ties till emancipated mankind is left the privilege of extinction through compulsory abstinence or voluntary sterility.

Such appear the final points to which Russian thought

is led through the works of the three great novelists. Their starting-point was one; all three aimed at unveiling the reality of life. Tourgenieff and Dostoyevsky might each have uttered these words of Tolstoi: "The hero of my novel, the one whom I love with all the force of my soul, whom I endeavour to reproduce in all his beauty, and who always was, and is, and will be beautiful — is Truth."[1] Yet truth, though single as an object of reproduction, becomes multiple when refracted by talents of different character. If the three writers are different as novelists, they are still more different as thinkers.

Tourgenieff, less than the other two, is to be measured by the standard of thought. He is, if not exclusively, at any rate first of all an artist; the thinker in him is an annex to the painter, and generally the former does not entirely reveal himself; he expects to be found out, commented upon, and brought into light by others. The whole of Russian critical literature in regard to Tourgenieff is nothing but an effort to discover the thinker under the enchanting vestments of the artist. The place given to his works from a social and political point of view is not so much due to the theories they set forth as to the intellectual activity they stirred up; taken as an index of contemporary thought, they are less important by what they express than by what they called forth. Tourgenieff's first appearance in print was greeted as an event of greater than a purely literary importance. The "Sketches of a Hunter" appeared in 1847. These charming stories had an idyllic background of rural scenery, and the portraits of peasants

[1] "Sebastopol in December, 1853."

and masters, which they present, framed in episodes of country life, are still regarded by some critics as a "poetical protest" against servitude.[1] A writer compares them in this sense to "Uncle Tom's Cabin."[2] Those who know both books will easily see the difference. There is no premeditated didacticism in Tourgenieff's stories; the mere choice of his characters proves it; he pictures good and evil wherever he sees it, whether among peasants or among landowners. A book meant to be a social or political sermon is apt to be one-sided. Tourgenieff, in his stories, is eclectic and unbiassed; in his portrayal of people and customs he is as impartial a painter as in his pictures of nature. He loves nature in all its aspects; pretty or ugly scenery equally furnishes him with material for a beautiful landscape; just so human nature and social life. He merely unveils humanity; by putting the two social classes side by side on the common ground of rural life in proximity to nature, he shows equally good and evil on both sides; and the fact that the good elements in the peasant's soul overweigh all other elements in the impression produced by the book does not make a protest or a satire of that which is simply a picture full of truth and sincerity.

Tourgenieff's method is one of the most striking examples of the power of art as such. He penetrates into the reader's soul exclusively by the channel of beauty, yet so pregnant of real life is this beauty, that once reaching our consciousness it becomes a fer-

[1] A. Nezelionov, "Tourgenieff in his Works." St. Petersburg, 1885 (Russian).

[2] Gr. Djanshiev, "An Epoch of Great Reforms." Moscow, 1894 (Russian).

ment of feeling and thought.[1] All his life the public sought to make the novelist responsible for theories, tendencies, opinions; and the voluntary emigrant, who spent his days in Paris, and only now and then passed a summer in his Russian country place, watched with a certain pleasure the critical bustle which his writings had stirred up in his distant fatherland. Like those weak characters who do not dislike being reproached for views they do not possess, or who like to be praised for virtues they wish they had, so our novelist did not protest, and willingly accepted the rôle he was invested with by the critics.

The Russian critical literature of the sixties had an important part in the intellectual development of the younger generation, and presents an interesting evolution of itself. Belinsky's demand that art should explain real life became the starting-point of the subsequent critics. On this basis a whole school of writers, forgetting that the master had put art and science side by side, and even ascribed to art the greater importance on account of the popularity of its means, by and by assigned to art a secondary, auxiliary part which finally deprived it of all significance except as a popularizer of useful knowledge. In the works of its chief representatives, Chernyshevsky,[2] Dobrolubov, and Pissarev, the Russian

[1] This is undoubtedly the real reason of his universal success. This is why, at a time of strongly divided opinions, he has been equally celebrated both by the liberal and by the conservative party. This is why, in spite of the historical actuality of his novels, they do not lose their freshness as time goes on. This is why his stories, though essentially Russian in their subjects, exercise such a fascinating charm on the foreign reader.

[2] His essay, "On Æsthetical Relation of Art to Reality," was the starting-point of the new tendency. He is chiefly known as the author of the novel, "What is to be Done?" which called forth such a fermentation

criticism of this time presents a gradual lowering of the æsthetical standard to the advantage of the standard of practical usefulness. A work of art was considered only in so far as it was an illustration of life; no intrinsic artistic qualities were required, and no attention was paid to them; instead of being an analysis of the work of art, the critique became a study of the social conditions or scientific theories exposed in the work of art. Literature, as such, was declared almost worthless if it did not aim at some result of immediate usefulness. Pissarev rejoices at the idea that after Gogol, the writers of prose obtain preponderance over poets, and takes it as a happy omen that in their turn prosaists will have to cede their place to a more useful kind of literature than novels.[1]

This tendency could not but lead to a final rejection of all art; it is evident that not only many forms of literature could find no mercy before such exigencies, but whole worlds of man's creation had to be put outside of the pale, — as, for instance, architecture and music which could not answer the standard of immediate usefulness. The younger generation grasped with enthusiasm at these theories: they were encouraging, they were easy; they saved the humiliation of bending to authorities; they dispensed with reverence for that which others ad-

among the younger generation. (Translated from the Russian into English by Nathan Haskell Dole and S. S. Skidelsky [under the title "A Vital Question"], Boston; from the French by Benjamin Tucker.) The above-mentioned critics are often regarded as the promoters and founders of the revolutionary nihilism of later days. Yet this conception is somewhat superficial. In their realism they are idealistic enthusiasts, but for being characteristic representatives of their epoch they cannot be made responsible for the anarchical aberrations of later years.

[1] "Flowers of Innocent Humour."

mired. By and by criticism degenerated into simple negation. Instead of going through the laborious process of artistic education which lifts us up to the understanding of a great artist's work, it was easier to declare that the fame of great artists was the product of prepossession, that there were no great artists, and that above all, art in itself was not worth regard. Reality presented too hard problems for time to be wasted in futilities; the practical exigencies of life were more important than any art, and after all, as a proverbial sentence of the time declared, "A pair of boots is superior to Shakespeare." To such absurd exaggerations did young turbulent minds carry the theories of their teachers. The levelling, democratizing influence of these ideas which had arisen on a ground of purely artistic criticism by and by took a wider extension and gradually swept away all acknowledgment of any authority.

In a more or less exaggerated degree, with more or less alloy of political protest and religious scepticism, these theories were professed by a great portion of the young generation. For the first time they were depicted in literature by Tourgenieff, who, in his novel, "Fathers and Sons," gave them the appellation of "nihilism."[1] Young Bazarov is the first type of the kind in fiction; he has been repeated by others. Goncharoff in his "Precipice" gave a portrait of a nihilist with striking features of roughness and brutality. Dostoyevsky in his "Devils" pictured a whole society of political conspirators. Yet Tourgenieff's hero is the

[1] In those days the word did not possess the terroristic colouring it received later from Western Europe, which made it synonymous with "anarchist." If we do not err, it is St. Augustine ("City of God") who first used the word "nihilist" to designate people "who believe nothing."

only lifelike reproduction; Goncharoff's and Dostoyevsky's types are not free of didacticism, whereas Tourgenieff depicts his hero with such olympic impartiality, that even to-day the critics are not agreed as to whether the author approves or condemns him. A controversy was stirred up by the appearance of "Fathers and Sons"; opinions were divided among people belonging to the same parties; some liberals praised the author for being on the side of the "sons"; others blamed him for sympathizing with the "fathers"; it was the same in the conservative camp: some greeted him as a violent reprover of the young tendencies, others reviled him for having ridiculed the elder generation.

The author himself, in his letters, with no great discrimination, simply kept up the flame of those who praised him. The fact is, that Tourgenieff had watched the type in its very first delineations, when it had not yet accentuated itself in those extreme forms which it assumed later; he had watched it in the moment of its formation, when, full of energy and noble desire of useful activity, it only detached itself from the great mass of the older generation; the protest at that moment was pregnant with promises which could not but excite sympathy, in spite of a certain arrogance and cynical indifference to the old forms. No one could have guessed at that moment to what abnormalities the type would be led throughout its subsequent evolution. Pissarev, in his critique of "Fathers and Sons," says: "The sense of the novel is as follows: contemporary youths commit errors and fall into extremes, but in their enthusiasm they reveal fresh forces and honest minds . . . these forces and these minds, without any outside help, will

lead them out on the right way and will support them in life." Alas! they did not support, at least, not all of them; they led them out, but not the "right way," so long as it leads to destruction. Fresh forces and honest minds will have still to look for that right way.

These are the chief ideas brought to mind by Tourgenieff's work as a whole. We must mention still another literary peculiarity of his which is a symptom of the time, and stands in connection with a movement which also has proceeded to great exaggeration. In his novel, "On the Eve," Tourgenieff gave the first portrait of a woman whose interests extend beyond the exclusive circle of her home life. Helen is the first woman in our literature who in her love for her husband finds force enough to become his intellectual companion, not only in his family life, but in his work outside the family. She is a representative of those noble specimens of Russian female character who, without abdicating home, transfuse their love into their husband's whole existence; who, without ceasing to be wife and mother, with equal intrepidity follow the masters of their heart into the abstract regions of science, into the struggles of practical life, into the gloom of Siberian exile. Later this was exaggerated; scientific interests became a sort of protest against family life and brought forth specimens of girls who made it a point of honour to be anything except wives or mothers.[1] It is perhaps the consequence of the richness of the Russian virgin soil, which slumbered during so many cen-

[1] In regard to this movement, see a few remarks in "Higher Education of Women in Russia," by Pr. S. Wolkonsky. ("Addresses." Winship & Co., Chicago. Unity Publishing Co., 1893.)

turies, that no seed can germinate in it without growing up to its extreme height.[1]

We now pass on to Dostoyevsky. If, with Tourgenieff, the thinker disappeared under the artist, with Dostoyevsky the artist is almost screened by the thinker and the moralist. We will not penetrate into the painful world of his creations. Those who have read the "Letters from the Dead House," or "Crime and Punishment," have experienced and paid with the torment of their own soul, the terrifying fascination exercised by that crowd of lunatics, criminals, epileptics, suicides, and all the "Humiliated and Offended"[2] outcasts of society, who throughout their doleful earthly agony proclaim the eternal beauty of the human soul. In spite of an awkward disproportion in the architectural structure of nearly all his works, in spite of the somewhat clumsy shape of his overcrowded novels, the power and the direction of his talent make him a unique figure in universal literature. All the tendencies of his work converge to one point — to deliver the human soul from the oblivion to which it has been relegated by selfishness, prejudice, and indifference of men. His whole work seems an effort to discover the primitive purity of the human soul under the worst aspects of misery. Nothing frightens him; he himself augments the difficulties of his task; he piles together details of social, physical, or moral degradation in most repulsive combinations,[3] and yet a drop of pure crystal always emerges

[1] On Tourgenieff, see Zabel, "Iw. Turgenief." Leipzig, 1884.

[2] The title of one of Dostoyevsky's novels.

[3] Only one work within our knowledge in the whole field of foreign literature can be compared to this side of Dostoyevsky's talent: this is, "Giovanni Episcopo," by Gabriele d'Annunzio, though the mystic atmos-

from the slime and triumphs over darkness. Like those heroes of charity who bring their help to lepers, so he goes to "humiliated and offended" souls and brings them comfort in the Christian acknowledgment of their human dignity. Calamity, illness, brutality, poverty, — he approaches everything with the same intrepidity. No obstacle is powerful enough to arrest this Livingstone of darkest misery.

"We must not look on Dostoyevsky," says a critic, "as on an ordinary novelist, a talented and intelligent writer. There was something more in him, and just that something more constitutes his characteristic peculiarity and explains his influence on others."[1] Dostoyevsky's influence was immense; contrary to Tourgenieff, who lived chiefly in his works, and whose figure to the end remained a riddle surrounded with mistrust, the author of "Crime and Punishment" became the most popular figure of his time; more popular perhaps than Leo Tolstoi in our days, for his popularity was free of that party spirit which characterizes the followers of the latter. Like the flood of the ocean, the young generation rushed to answer his appeal. It was a noble, a beneficent movement. In a time when revolutionary ferment troubled the minds of men and shook the stability of faith and opinions, when the great anonymous monster of European anarchy was enrolling and engulfing so many "fresh forces," and "honest minds" among Russian youths, when hatred and destruction were proclaimed the principles of the regenera-

phere which emanates from Dostoyevsky's work, the religious beauty which floats round his most repulsive pictures, is totally absent in the Italian novel.

[1] Vl. Solovioff, "Three Lectures on Dostoyevsky" (Russian).

tion of the world, — Dostoyevsky's words of Christian humility and love resounded like a prophetic warning. Coming from a man who had himself gone through four years of hard labour in Siberia,[1] these ideas acquired an authority of indisputableness which no man could venture to contest unless he wished to do wrong to the venerable writer.[2] He was more than a leader, he became a centre, for round his glowing heart divergency of political opinions disappeared; with his address at the consecration of Poushkin's monument in Moscow,[3] in June, 1880, he enraptured and carried away all parties: Slavophiles, Westernists, liberals, conservatives, oblivious of divergencies, all joined in a common enthusiasm. In later criticism, divergent opinions again accentuated themselves, and the address on Poushkin was judged in different ways; but at the moment when it was delivered all were in accord — such was the power of this man.

His small, meagre figure, worn out with torment and epilepsy, his sepulchral voice, and, in spite of it, a most wonderful elocution in which the inner flame contrasted with the ascetic rigidity of his appearance, exercised an almost hypnotizing fascination. In the last years of his life he several times appeared in public, taking part in literary evenings; his last novel, "The Brothers Karamazov," was just being written, and many chapters of that book so full of horror, where religion and crime,

[1] Dostoyevsky had been exiled in 1849 for having been involved in the so-called "Petrashevsy affair."

[2] I remember the words of Prof. O. Miller, of the St. Petersburg University. In one of his lectures, speaking of those who had had the intention of carrying fetters before Dostoyevsky's coffin, he said, "No greater offence could have been done to his memory."

[3] See Lecture VI, p. 187.

asceticism and luxury, intermingle to form the most terrifying tragedy, were first made known to the public, through the author's own voice. I remember one of those evenings, in the winter of 1879–1880. Tourgenieff was in Petersburg, and took part in the readings; he was greeted and cheered with the enthusiasm we all feel in recalling the finest days of our youth, for strange to say, Tourgenieff will always remain a contemporary of young people; in our generation we love him for what we felt when first we read him, for never did we read him better than at sixteen; we look back to him, we love him like a reminiscence, and people greeted him on that night like a dear companion of their best days. Yet the white-haired giant who charmed us with a lovely page of his "Sketches of a Hunter" had to cede the palm of primacy to the puny author of "Crime and Punishment," who made us shudder with a new chapter of the "Brothers Karamazov." Quite apart from their respective literary merits, the personality of Dostoyevsky at that time had a greater power over the heart; he was no reminiscence, he was an active part of life, he was a portion of every single one of us, and he was greeted with the delirium of people who feel their whole nature, with the experiences of the past and the aspirations of the future, shaken to the root. When he died, on the 29th of January, 1881, people felt that something great was missing in the world, and in his own words they said: "The righteous man goes, his light remains." The light left behind by Dostoyevsky is one of the purest that shines on this earth; it is one of the most precious legacies bequeathed by man to future generations.

The standard by which we are to judge Dostoyev-

sky's work may appear from the following lines of Leo Tolstoi: "I never saw him, never had any relation with him, and all at once when he died I understood that he was the nearest, the dearest, and the most indispensable man to me. Never did I think of measuring myself with him, never! the nature of what he did was such that the more he did, the better I felt. Art excites me to jealousy, intelligence as well, but the deeds of a heart provoke nothing but joy."[1] He was in literature an active and untiring worker for the establishment of the Christian principles of love, humility, self-abnegation. His whole system of ethics is contained in this sentence, "Every man is a sinner against every man." From a more strictly national point of view, by his theories he is often classified in a party which may be regarded as a fraction of the Slavophiles; and as one of their chief arguments is that the upper classes have detached themselves from the national soil, and that they must return to the soil, they are designated with a name we might translate by "Soilers."[2] The filiation of their ideas would run as follows: the lower people as representative of primitive purity and the depository of real Christianity, uncorrupted by civilization, becomes an object of veneration. If we are bad, it is because we have lost that which they have preserved; we must forget about Europe, think of nothing but ourselves, in patriotic humility, not in patriotic pride; we must enter the way of individual self-improvement, we must become like our younger brethren, and when the whole country shall be regenerated by real Christianity, then we may think

[1] Letter to N. Strahov.

[2] Their chief representatives: Pogodin, Shevyrioff, the critic Apollon Grigoriev; in our days, N. Strahov, critic and publicist.

of others, and with patriotic self-consciousness of our regeneration undertake the great work of assimilating the rest of the world. In a monthly publication called "The Diary of a Writer," Dostoyevsky set forth these ideas with an ever-increasing emphasis; warmed by interests of actuality and excited by polemics, his tone often became sarcastic, and at times deviated from principles of Christian humility. As a whole, "The Diary of a Writer" is not one of the finest pages of Dostoyevsky's work, but it presents an interesting picture of the most important questions of political, social, and literary life as they refracted themselves in the mind of one of our greatest writers.

With the idea of individual self-improvement, we touch the source of the two chief tendencies of Russian thought. You have seen that with Dostoyevsky individual self-improvement becomes the starting-point of a process which gradually leads to social, national, and universal improvement; and, indeed, with him the individual soul is but a co-operating part of the collective human soul; collectivity is the principle infused in the whole work of him who said that "every man is a sinner against every man." Individuality is but an instrument, the final aim is the great human family, and the only form for the final establishment of its happiness is one universal church, identified with social solidarity. Such were Dostoyevsky's ideas.

But now comes another literary giant; starting from the same point of individual self-improvement, he is led in quite the opposite direction. As collectivity is generally obtained at the cost of individual compromises, as its benefits are overweighed by its deficiencies, the principle of collectivity is condemned and declared wrong as

paralyzing the normal improvement of the individual; ties of social, national, religious collectivity are relaxed; the individual is abandoned to himself, and self-improvement, as leading to an inevitable regeneration of the whole through the partial regeneration of the units, is imposed upon man as his only duty, and the final aim of his aspiration. You see the difference between the two theories. With Dostoyevsky individual self-improvement leads to unification, it leads to division with Leo Tolstoi.

Strange are the relations of the artist and the thinker in this wonderful writer. With Tourgenieff the thinker is latent, he is subjected to the artist; thought is the emanation, the result of beauty. In Dostoyevsky, they coexist: the thinker predominates, yet he does not expel the artist; he takes much space, he is cumbrous, he makes it difficult for the artist, yet the latter forces his way through the material piled together by the former, and with a single scene of sublime psychological reality enforces pages of philosophy. In Tolstoi, the artist and the thinker also coexist, but they are rivals; they never speak at the same time, they seldom endorse each other's words; as a matter of fact, they sometimes do not agree at all. And yet, it is always the artist who is right; the thinker raises his voice with an intrusive persistence, but the artist will not be outdone, and whenever he reappears in all the indisputable authority of his genius, his serene vision goes further, straighter, and higher than any philosophical lucubrations of the thinker.[1]

[1] General Dragomirov, well known for his theory of educating the soldier and the troop (see "Théories du Général Dragomiroff," Paris, Ch. Lavauzelle. "Le Général Dragomirow," Art Roë, "Revue des Deux

The literary figure of the great novelist is well known; it is perhaps the first example in the history of universal literature of a writer who during his life has attained to the fullest possible degree of fame, for he is the first great writer to whom it has been given to avail himself of all the means of diffusion offered by modern civilization. Whereas Dante, Shakespeare, Cervantes, had to wait centuries till they should be translated into all languages; till printing should multiply them to infinity; till the means of transportation should be so developed as to carry them into every corner of the world, Count Tolstoi had the luck of living in a time when just that very civilization which he so much reviles, grants him in the space of a few years the condensed result of centuries; his posthumous glory will not be greater than his popularity. Faithful to our programme we will not so much examine his talent and his ideas as their influence, and how far they have been accepted.

Seldom has a writer's talent been so universally acknowledged as the talent of the author of "War and Peace." All parties, all schools, all generations, all nationalities, agree. Indisputable as life itself are his wonderful pictures of life; they are broad and varied as life; they are terrible as life, and as profound. No one has fathomed such secret springs of the human soul; no one has followed it so close to the threshold

Mondes." 1st November, 1895), examining "War and Peace," from the military point of view, makes note of many beautiful scenes contradicting false theories: "It is almost incomprehensible how the same man can be so excellent in painting pictures of battles and so unsatisfactory in explaining the phenomena of war." M. Dragomirov, Analysis of "War and Peace." Kiev, 1895 (Russian).

of earthly existence; no one has with such inexorable persistency of analysis hunted up the microbes of insincerity which contaminate the human conscience; no one has ransacked with such cruel serenity the yawning wounds opened by psychological vivisection. And every one who reads Tolstoi's books feels subjugated by this power, and yields to the omnipotency of that genius, which in the epic panoramas of his novels embraces armies, nations, countries, and which in a short tale of two peasants, where the repenting "master" transfuses his life into his frozen "servant," has embraced the whole of humanity, and in the narrow compass of a sledge, lost in a winter tempest and buried under the snow, has concentrated the universe and shown the gates of eternity.

Such is the artist — with the greatest uniting power ever displayed by a novelist. But the thinker appears, and seems to make it his aim to undo the work of the artist. It is the most striking feature of Tolstoi's intellect, this contrast between the uniting power of his literature and the disintegration preached by his philosophy. The disintegration begins with his own person. The thinker detaches himself from the individual and becomes the analyzer, the judge, and the prosecutor of the artist. The author of "War and Peace" is condemned by the author of "My Religion." Art is declared a plaything unworthy of those who really care for the prosperity of their brethren. Does not the lower people ignore Poushkin, Gogol, Tourgenieff? Does it feel any necessity of knowing them?[1] The upper classes must concentrate their activity only

[1] "Progress and the Definition of Instruction."

upon such things as bring an immediate benefit to the masses; all that does not aim at this is superfluous, and we must give up all superfluity. The thinker forces the artist to write fairy-tales for the peasants, and the artist is so beautiful in his universality, so unconscious of social distinctions in his picturing of the human soul, that these fairy-tales composed for peasants become favourites with every one. The thinker forces the artist to give up painting, to drop the brush, to pick up the pen, and to become a philosophical writer. At this point the spirit of disintegration passes from his person into his theories, and finally into the opinions of those who were so unanimous in their judgment of the artist. In a few words, Tolstoi's teachings may be summed up as follows: their basis is non-resistance to evil; their dogma, the perniciousness of civilization as the result of collectivity; their practical prescription, the dissolution of society to the benefit of the individual.[1] We will not pause to consider the good side of his preaching which, in the main, can be reduced to a campaign against human insincerity in all its manifestations — the author pleads his cause well enough himself. We will rather follow up its defects, and even not so much the intrinsic defects of the teaching as the defective side of its influence.

The real followers of Tolstoi, the regular "Tolstoiists," are not numerous; they are people worthy of all esteem for carrying out within the limits of possibility the

[1] In a private letter kindly communicated to me by Vl. S. Solovioff, Count Tolstoi thus formulates the practical application of this theory: "I think that there can be no other way for me to warm up the masses except the development of the greatest quantity of warmth in myself; any effort of mine aiming at another purpose is a useless waste of energy."

prescription of abdicating superfluity, though the line is always somewhat hard to draw between that which is really necessary, and that which only seems so. The Count himself, at his country-place, gives rather strange examples of practical application. The author of "Anna Karenina" plunges his hands into clay, and builds stoves which afterwards are rebuilt by regular stove builders. Every day he takes an hour of ploughing, after which exercise he enjoys the satisfaction of eating his dinner "in the sweat of his brow." Of all this, is it the plough and stoves the Count considers necessary, or is it the dinner he intends with time to eliminate as superfluous?

And yet this practical side, however ridiculous in its innocence, is the only positive element of the teaching; all the rest is negative, and just this negation which underlies the theory is the poisonous and yet attractive side of it, at least attractive for those who, themselves never having strained their energies in the cause of positive faith, feel glad to be absolved from any strivings by him who teaches that our ideal lies behind, and not before us. The relaxing of human energy, this is the corrupting element of the theory. Modern society as it has crystallized itself is declared wrong: therefore, all who had but a slight impulse of the sense of duty grasp at the theory as at a deliverance. Why should we work as long as the accomplishment of our best intentions depends upon a state of things which is wrong? All efforts of charity, all real enthusiasm, are undermined; nihilistic laughter greets the best strivings; a man has founded a hospital, but the hospital depends upon the government, and governments are immoral, — consequently, the man is pitied as one who errs; another gives a sum for charitable institutions; if

he were a real Christian, it is said, he ought to have given away everything — this does not count. Here, we repeat, we do not judge the teaching, we simply state the results of its influence. People start from the point that, if measured by the Gospel, we are all insolvent debtors, and therefore those who make efforts to acquit themselves, at least of a portion of their debts, are ridiculed.[1] The intellectual influence is no less relaxing than the moral; civilization is proclaimed pernicious, and the ignorant by the fact of his ignorance considers himself above all others.[2] Authorities are undermined, all workers of human enlightenment dethroned, people who have never read a line of philosophy declare with profession of competency that there is but one philosopher in the world, and this is Count Tolstoi.[3] The religious influence is still worse. Tolstoi constructs his teaching on a basis of scripture texts; he and his followers consider that they have the monopoly of the right comprehension of the Gospels, — and thus people who never believed anything grasp at the Gospel, not in order to learn, but in order to

[1] The limits of man's duties are so much widened, their object removed to such unattainable distances in his book, "Light is Within Yourself," that between the uselessness of their present activities and the unattainableness of the ideals, all energies relapse into hopeless apathy.

[2] "Those who are on principle enemies of governmental organization are always, and necessarily, on principle enemies of culture." Vl. Solovioff, "The Sense of the State," in "European Messenger," December, 1895 (Russian).

[3] All critics who have applied the scientific standard to Tolstoi's philosophical writings are unanimous as to the instability of his philosophical vocabulary and the obscurity of his logical methods. A. Kozloff, "Letters on Count Leo Tolstoi's Book 'On Life'" in "Questions in Philosophy and Psychology." Second year, Nos. 5, 6, 7. Moscow, 1890. B. Yousefovich, "On the Philosophical Teachings of Count Leo Tolstoi" (Russian).

establish the inferiority of those who believe, but cannot live up to its commands; on the basis of Christianity, a sect is arising which supplants charity and love by criticism and scorn.

And what is offered in all this as the positive beacon of hope? Tolstoi himself says he cannot foresee what will become of the world if all men follow his precepts;[1] yet he asserts that our ideal lies "behind us";[2] this evidently means ages anterior to civilization. Only he does not determine the chronological moment: is it the age of iron or the age of stone? Or if he used the term in the sense of the age of the individual, will he say it was meant as the purity of childhood? Again, the moment is not determined. When does impurity begin? To be completely free from impurity, we must return to those days when we yet did not exist. And indeed, in the "Kreutzer Sonata," mankind is given advice which is equivalent to suicide.[3] A theory, the principle of which is dissolution, could not but lead to death.

Dismemberment of society means retrograding of individuals; and where is the end of this gradual abdication? Shall we retrograde into the depth of centuries till we "return to earth"? Life is not possible without struggles; plants struggle and expel each other; society is the regulator of individual struggles. If society is wrong as it exists, this does not mean that it must be altogether destroyed or that the spirit of sociabil-

[1] "Light is Within Yourself."

[2] "Progress and the Definition of Instruction."

[3] The implacability appears cold and cruel of a teaching which in the name of love recommends the self-suppression of mankind for the benefit of an abstract theory.

ity is an element of nature which man must counter-check.[1] How long would Count Tolstoi have to wait before individual self-improvement would suppress servitude? There would have been no servitude, he will answer, had humanity not shaped itself into societies. Maybe so, yet we cannot suppress the past, we have to work on the given basis, we cannot start the world anew; servitude was a given fact, and once again, how long should we have had to wait for this given fact to die away? The world as it exists is also a fact, a living fact, not a dead sentence which can be erased and another substituted for it; and as it exists it lives, and nothing will arrest its further evolution on the basis of the past. The duty of the future is to regulate, not to suppress the continuation of the world's growth, therefore future ages will work at the extension, and not at the extinction of that which has been acquired by preceding ages. For the past exists as well as the future, and cannot be forced into non-existence. Count Tolstoi says that the lower people does not know Poushkin, and therefore he concludes Poushkins are useless. But *he* knows Poushkin, and he cannot force himself to forget him; and so long as he remembers he must want others to know him, for the moment they know him, they will want him.

No, Count Tolstoi shall not impede the blossoming of the world; however powerful the thinker, he shall never make anyone believe that the author of "War

[1] Dismemberment seems not only the aim of Tolstoi's theories, but a tendency of his very intellectual proceedings. This is what the above-quoted General Dragomirov says in speaking of Tolstoi's views on the elements working in war: "Does he not remind us of a chemist who, after having decomposed water and not knowing how to combine it again,

and Peace" is useless because unknown to the ignorant; the philosopher shall not force out the artist, and shall not prevent him from becoming, even in spite of himself, one of the greatest educators of the future generations; the repentant author will not be able to erase himself from the list of the benefactors of humanity, for the artist in him has embodied in beauty too many great ideas, and "beauty, or the incorporated ideal," says our philosopher, "is the better part of our real world, the one which not only exists, but is worthy of existence."[1]

would affirm that water does not exist in nature, and that there are only oxygen and hydrogen — two gases thoroughly different and having nothing in common." (Op. cit.) The interesting thing about this is that it was said while "War and Peace" was being written, consequently long before Count Tolstoi had entered the career of philosopher.

[1] Vl. Solovioff, "Beauty in Nature," in "Questions of Philosophy and Psychology." First year, No. 1. Moscow, 1889 (Russian).

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Dates marked with a star (*) are not mentioned in the text

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1765 . . . † Lomonossov.
1777 . . . † Soumarokov.
1781 . . . "Friendly Scientific Society."
1782 . . . "The Underaged," by Von Viezin.
1783 . . . Annexation of the Crimea.
1790 . . . "Letters of a Russian Tourist," by Karamsin.
1792 . . . † Von Viezin.
1796 . . . † Catherine the Great.
1799 . . . Italian Campaign of Souvarov.
1800 . . . First edition of the "Word about Igor's Fights."
1801 . . . † Paul I.
1803 . . . * University of Dorpat (now Youryev).
1805 . . . * University of Kazan.
1810 . . . Lyceum of Tsarskoye Selo.
1812 . . . "Fatherland War."
1816 . . . † Derjavine.
1818 . . . "History of the Russian State" by Karamsin.
1819 . . . University of St. Petersburg.
1820 . . . "Rouslan and Ludmila," by Poushkin.
1823 . . . "Eugene Oneguin," by Poushkin.
1825 . . . † Alexander I.
1825 . . . "The Decembrists'" revolution.
1826 . . . † Karamsin.
1833 . . . * University of Kiev.
1835 . . . "The Revisor," by Gogol.
1837 . . . † Poushkin.
1841 . . . † Lermontov.
1842 . . . † Koltzoff
1842 . . . "The Dead Souls," by Gogol.
1843 . . . Archæographical Commission.
1846 . . . Archæological Society.
1846 . . . Geographical Society.
1847 . . . "Sketches of a Hunter," by Tourgenieff.
1848 . . . † Belinsky.
1852 . . . † Joukovsky.
1853–1856. Crimean War.
1855 . . . † Nicolas I.
1859 . . . "On the Eve," by Tourgenieff.

1860 . . . "Fathers and Sons," by Tourgenieff.
1862 . . . *University of Odessa.
1864 . . . Institution of the provincial self-government.
1864 . . . "Judicial Code of Emperor Alexander II."
1867 . . . * Cession of the Russian territory in America.
1872 . . . "War and Peace," by Count Leo Tolstoi.
1874 . . . * Compulsory military service.
1877–1878. * Turkish War.
1878 . . . "The Devils," by Dostoyevsky.
1878 . . . † Nekrassov.
1881 . . . † Dostoyevsky.
1881 . . . † Alexander II.
1883 . . . † Tourgenieff.
1888 . . . * Siberian University (Tomsk).
1894 . . . † Alexander III.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE

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DYNASTY OF RURIK

862–1598

Rurik **NOVGOROD**

Igor = Olga **KIEV**

Sviatoslav

Vladimir = Anna of Byzantium

Yaroslav the Wise

Vsevolod Elizabeth Anna Anastasia

Vladimir Monomah

(George) **SOUZDAL**

(Vsevolod)

Yaroslav

(Alexander Nevsky)

(Daniel) **MOSCOW**

John I Kalita

Simeon the Proud (John II)

Dimitry Donskoy

Dimitry Donskoy

Bazil I

Bazil II the Gloomy

John III = Sophia Palæologus

Bazil III

John IV the Terrible
= Anastasia Romanov

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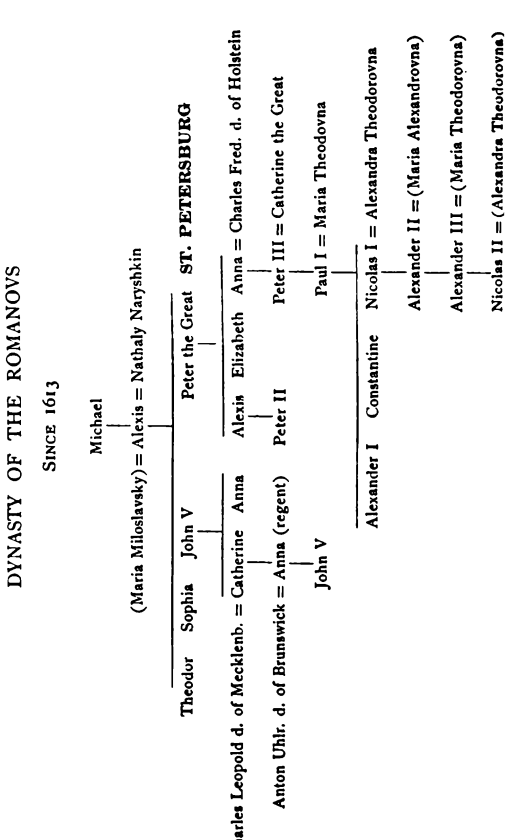
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SINCE 1613
Michael
(Maria Miloslavsky) = Alexis = Nathaly Naryshkin
Theodor
Sophia
John V
Peter the Great
ST. PETERSBURG
Charles Leopold d. of Mecklenb. = Catherine
Anna
Alexis
Elizabeth
Anna = Charles Fred. d. of Holstein
Anton Uhlr. d. of Brunswick = Anna (regent)
Peter II
Peter III = Catherine the Great
John V
Paul I = Maria Theodovna
Alexander I
Constantine
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